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REAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TO-DAY.

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING.

WHAT do you mean by "Poetic Christianity"? As I read between the lines, your thought is of a "religion in the air," that floats between sky and earth, an unsubstantial shape, such as the mediæval artists loved to paint,—of angels hovering above the heads of men, treading on a patch of cloud just large enough for foot-hold. And by the "religion on the ground" you intend to signify a practical, working faith, that can tramp the muddy highways whereon the great army is marching, to gather up foot-sore wanderers who, from fatigue, have fallen out of the ranks, and wash away the mire running brooks, and feed the famishing from its scrip, and slake the thirst of the faint from its flask, and so set unwilling deserters on the road to brave battle and victory once more. Now, if under the courteous phrase of "prophet" you design to hint that my "Poetic Christianity" is an "up-in-a-balloon" religion,—a floating, phantom-like, fanciful religion,—let me frankly reply, "None of that, I pray you! Life is quite too real and earnest, too profoundly tragic, too manfully toiling, too glowingly all-alive." No, dear brother, I utterly agree with you, that what mankind at the centres of civilization is impatiently calling for to-day is a manly, muscular religion, that bare-handed and, if need be, bare-footed can drive piles and lay foundations and build bridges for the hosts of swarming emigrants from the old world of tradition to the new world of hopeful humanity to pass securely over. In a word, the "Christianity" I

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am pining after, longing for, aspiring towards with all my soul, is the *real Christ life* of our Father's Beloved Son.

Seven years ago I tried to preach my gospel, that the *Vital Centre* of Free Religious Union is the *Life of God in Man* as made gloriously manifest in Jesus the Christ. And remember, too, how I illustrated the historic fact, that around that centre the great religions of our race arranged themselves in orderly groups. For nearly a year I opened my heart and mind to the Free Religionists and Liberal Christians, without a veil to hide my inmost Holy of holies. But shall I tell you, my friend, that when I bade you all farewell, in the summer of 1870, it was with sad forebodings. And why? The story, too long to tell in full, ran thus: One, in his wish to be bathed in the sense of ever-present Deity, had ceased to commune with the Spirit of spirits in prayer. Another, in his repulsion from imprisoning anthropomorphism, had abandoned all conceptions of a personal God, and so lost the Father. A third, in his heroic purpose to lead a heavenly-human life, here and now, gave up the hope of immortal existence, as a sailor might turn from contemplating the cloud-palaces of sunset to pull the tarry cordage and spread the coarse canvas of his ship. And, saddest of all, a fourth, in his bold resolve to be spontaneous in every impulse and emotion, spurned the motherly monitions of Duty so sternly that Conscience even seemed driven to return to heaven, like "Astræa Redux." In brief, one felt as if the Liberal College of All Religions in council with pantheism, agnosticism, and atheistic materialism, was destined to fall flat to dust in a confused chaos of most commonplace *spiritual* "*know-nothingism*." Such was my disheartening vision of the near future for dearly loved compeers. And a darker valley of "vastation," as our Swedenborgian friends say, than I was driven into, I have never traversed. Once again I sought comfort with the blessed company of sages

and saints of the Orient and Hellas, — with Lao-Tsze and Kung-Fu-Tsze; with the writers of the Bhagavad-Geeta and the Dhamma-Pada, of the hymns of the ancient Avesta and the modern sayings and songs of the Sufis; with radiant Plato and heroic Epictetus, &c. Once more they refreshed and reinspirited me as of old. But they did something better: hand in hand, they brought me up to the white marble steps, and the crystal baptismal font, and the bread and wine crowned communion table, — ay, to the cross in the chancel of the Christian temple; and, as they laid their hands in benediction on my head, they whispered, "Here is your real *home*. We have been but your guides in the desert to lead you to fellowship with the Father and His Son in the Spirit of holy humanity. Peace be with you." And so, my brother, once again, and with a purer, profounder, tenderer love than ever, like a little child, I kissed the blood-stained feet and hands and side of the hero of Calvary, and laid my head on the knees of the gentlest of martyrs, and was uplifted by the embracing arms of the gracious elder brother, and in his kiss of mingled pity and pardon found the peace I sought, and became a Christian in *experience*, as through a long life I had hoped and prayed to be. Depend upon it, there is on this small earth-ball no *reality* more *real* than this central communion with God in Christ, of which the saints of all ages in the Church universal bear witness.

A closing word now of *our* relationship to the Unitarian communion, out of whose bosom we were born. It is true that the controversial tone of our meetings surprises while it grieves me. "What is the good," one can but say to himself, "of refurbishing and sharpening anew the old rusty armor and weapons of our sires and grandsires, when they in our place would put forth all their force to beat their swords into ploughshares, to gladden by culture the peaceful paradise already won, and so enrich the wide

world with its fruit?" Let us prove the quickening power of our religious principles by rearing a race of larger, brighter, sweeter, more mellow Christians than Christendom has ever seen. That is our vocation. Only by manifesting in spirit, truth, and deed that our form of religious life breeds a nobler stock of real children of God can we convert fellow-believers of other Christian communions to our faith. And we need you and all our friends of the "Free Religious Union" to help us thus to finish the work which our forefathers intrusted to our fidelity. Why withdraw from our communion just when all its most earnest men and women are beginning to recognize that the very glory of the Christian religion, of the Christian gospel, of the Christian Church, is the affirmation and experience of the *indwelling* of the Father in the united family of His children by His spirit of holiness, truth, and love, whereby Jesus was filled to fulness, and so transfigured into the Father's image? Why withdraw from us just when we are aspiring, hoping, aiming to make *real* in persons, homes, societies, nations, humanity, the life of God in man and of man in God; that is, heaven now and the sure pledge of heaven hereafter? Help us, dear friends, with all your best powers, — help us to make this grand Republic a real Christian commonwealth, and so a centre of peace for the reconciled race of man.

American Unitarian Association, 25 *Beacon Street*, Boston.

CHILDHOOD AND THEOLOGY.

BY WILLIAM P. TILDEN.

A ROSY-CHEEKED girl, with a joyous skip,
And a snatch of song on her ruby lip,
Was trundling her hoop on the gravelled way,
When a stranger, watching her wanton play,
Lifted his finger, as much as to say,
"A word, if you please!" She stopped stone-still,
And tossed back her wayward curls with a will,
Letting the light of her luminous eyes
Fall on the stranger in sweet surprise,
While with parted lips and listening ear
She waited, in wonder, his message to hear.

"Have you found the Saviour?" he gravely said.
She shook her ringlets, then, dropping her head,
Seemed turning the question o'er and o'er,
As one she had never heard before.
Then sadly replied, as her hands she crossed
"Why, I didn't know the Saviour was lost."

"You don't understand what I mean, my child,"
The stranger replied, as he *almost* smiled.
"DO YOU LOVE THE DEAR JESUS?" "Oh, yes, indeed;
And I love to hear my dear mother read
How fondly he loved every little child.
And I know, when *he* spoke, he always smiled.
And whenever I'm good as I can be,
I am very sure that he smiles on me."

"But do you trust in the blood, my child?
Do you know you are totally defiled?
That on the dark waves of sin you are tossed,
And without the blood are certainly lost?"

Her hazel eyes dropped, but she raised them again,
As a child-thought flashed through her little brain.
"Oh, yes, sir: I trust in the blood," she said.
"'Tis my blood that keeps me from being dead;
And please do not think that I am lost,
For right down there, where the car's just crossed,
Is my papa's house. You see I could run
Right home in a minute. It would be fun.
Get up, old hoop." And away she went,
Far down the walk, on her play intent,
Leaving the stranger to sigh for the teaching
Of good old times, and doctrinal preaching.
And he sadly mused, as away she ran,
"*The germ of a Unitarian.*"

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, 25 *Beacon Street*, BOSTON.

OUR MISSIONARY WORK.

BY JOHN D. LONG.

I LIKE this idea of missionary work right here at home, and I care very little under what banner it proceeds. I am not much afraid of what our various sects denominate, in everybody except themselves, false doctrine, if only it be honestly entertained, and if there is candor enough to reject it when its falsity is made apparent. It will be time for any of us to call another's doctrine false when we can ourselves, with any confidence, assert that our own is true. False and true are relative terms, and I shall probably know very little about the false till I have arrived at the absolutely true. Let us remember that the false is often a lame step towards the true. A grand thing, indeed, it would be, in a catholic and hopeful spirit, to regard all reaching of the human intelligence and soul as a growth along the whole line towards the truth. Let us not despise or dread honest and inquiring error. How have the sciences of medicine and astronomy, how have the progresses of social life, the causes of education, of health, of legislation, been advanced, except by deduction from error and the hard discipline of blunder!

I preface this because I regard our mission as only a mission, not an end; as a very humble, but intelligent and fearless, means, which in God's providence is doing God's work, and seeking God's truth, along with other means, — some better, perhaps, some certainly not so good, and all poor, compared with the future possibilities of Christianity. It is a mission fit here and now, because the mission of our liberal faith has always been not so much to the ignorance of remote heathen as to intelligence and com-

mon sense and spiritual attainment, like those of this rare and excellent New England community. It has been a twofold mission, and I am not sure that in one of its two directions its work, as a distinctive work of its own, is not approaching completion. For a century, more or less, it has been a very ploughshare in the hard and bitter soil of a severe theology; which hid the smiles of a tender Father always behind the frown of an offended and averted Deity; which robbed human nature of its worth and dignity, and which substituted the skeleton of a technical and complicated scheme of injustice for the warm life of the domesticity of man with God. It has let in on all this sunlight and gladness and cheer. It has mellowed even the shadow of death with the tints of a golden sunset of promise. It has left its imprint not more in its own ranks than in ranks outside its own. Its results are hardly more Channing and Hale and Clarke, than Brooks and Stanley and Murray. Its influence is not more patent in the fruitful graft of the Methodist Collyers than in the earnest work of the revivalist Moody, who seems almost of another faith than that of the revivalists of fifty years ago. I want no more generous and comfortable atmosphere than pervades the churches of so many of our neighbors, who differ from us to-day less in spirit than in name, and from whose number our own ministry is now and then supplied with many of its shining lights.

It has been a good work, — that of our liberal faith in this direction; and, maybe, in this direction its most effective labor is done. It is not for us to say that the time is not near when it will itself no longer guide the advance, but in its turn follow some brighter torch, some more incisive lead. Be that as it may, the other element of its mission it can never exhaust. Its crusade against narrowness of dogma over, the better and endless work

of being a live, vitalizing, inspiring, practical, constant, permeating spring and flow of Christian character and love and faith in the world should absorb its endeavors. Science, scholarship, brains, will take care of the letter and the doctrine; let us have now the full measure of the spirit and the life. Let us preach the sweetness of faith and duty, more of the soul of Jesus, more of the spiritual exaltation that lift the conduct, the thought, the hope, the act. Would there were divinity schools turning out classes of young men all richly and mainly educated in spiritual grace, as our academies turn out boys drilled in Latin exercises! Would that our churches might glow more with the warmth of religious kindling, echoing less with the puzzles of the modern schoolmen! Would that the hearts of men and women might be touched, their lives guided, so that Christian civilization should be not the husk of a euphonism, but the full corn in the ear of Christian living; and that we could feel assured that *our* faith were indeed making us better and holier; moulding our relations; guiding our walk; entering into our business, and even our politics; directing our education; reforming our reforms; enlightening our treatment of the criminal; attacking our intemperance; sanctifying and spiritualizing our ambitions; making our religion not a form, a habit, a convenience, but something bountiful and large and imminent; making our churches places of worship, and training us, through Christ's sweet example, into loving, trusting, obedient, and pious children of God, — blessed, because gentle in spirit; meek; hungering and thirsting after righteousness; merciful; pure in heart; peace-makers; and persecuted, if at all, for righteousness' sake! From my soul, I believe we have nothing like the gospel of Jesus. Our church, having dissipated shadow and gloom, must not, and will not, fall short of the substance. That substance is that gospel, — the life, his-

tory, words, character, example, faith, and, more than all, the principles of Jesus, which all appeal to the heart of humanity, as no abstraction can; and by clinging to which, and dwelling on which, and preaching which, and endearing which, other churches reach men as sometimes we do not. Let us, too, throw out one more anchor in this same deep and restful haven. Not an iota less of intelligence and reason and truth, but a world-full and a heart-full of the spirit of him who through his own has linked our souls so palpably to the divine soul, that the avenue to the Father's love and benediction seems to lie straight through the tender heart of the Son.

HYMN.

BY JOHN D. LONG.

I WOULD, dear Jesus, I could break
The hedge that creeds and hearsay make,
And, like thy first disciples, be
In person led and taught by thee.

I read thy words, — they are so sweet;
I seek the footprints of thy feet;
But men so mystify the trace,
I long to see thee face to face.

Wouldst thou not let me, at thy side,
In thee, in thee so sure, confide?
Like John, upon thy breast recline,
And feel thy heart make mine divine?

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, 25 *Beacon Street, Boston.*

BUNYAN'S CHRISTIANA'S WORK.

FROM "SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY."

IT is precisely the same work (the work we commend) as that of countless, unpicturesque, middle-aged women, from Maine woods to Pennsylvania villages, or California ranches, — the great, decent, religious, unknown majority, never to be interviewed or published in any shape, out of whose daily lives grow the modesties, the strength, the virtue of American homes, the safety of our future.

Such women, whether they be wives of millionnaires or of laborers, always make real again in the world the one poetic ideal of a middle aged woman, — Bunyan's Christiana, who set out with her little ones along the weary way from the City of Destruction to the dark flood which barred heaven from them. It is worth while for wives and mothers, even now in 1875, to read of her daily work, — how she urged her boys, and carried her babies in her arms, and did not fall into the Slough of Despond, as her husband had done, and never forgot to take Mercy along with her. How one day her task was to face Apollyon, and the next, to "cure Matthew of stomach-gripes from eating green apples." How there gathered about her, in the course of the long, painful journey, children's children and friends, and the poor and the lame and the blind, and walked with her, and were a joyous, happy company, until the end came. There is nothing to me more pathetic in any history than the words which tell of how one day the messenger came to this gray haired woman, to say that her work as wife and mother at last was done. Then she called her children about her, and was gladdened in that last hour to see

that they had kept their garments so white; and, after she had put them in the care of her old friends, she went down with a beckon of farewell into the dark river, beyond which the gate stood open where her Lord waited for her, and the husband of her youth, and was seen no more.

"And at her departure her children wept. But Great-heart played upon the well-tuned cymbal and the harp for joy."

THE GREAT CONCERN.

BY ORVILLE DEWEY.

The soul's concern is the great concern. The interests of experimental, vital, practical religion, are the great interests of our being. No language can be too strong, no language can be strong enough, to give them due expression. No anxiety is too deep, no care too heedful, no effort too earnest, no prayer too importunate, to be bestowed upon this almost infinite concern of the soul's purification, piety, virtue, and welfare. No labor of life should be undertaken, no journey pursued, no business transacted, no pleasure enjoyed, no activity employed, no rest indulged in, without ultimate reference to that great end of our being. Without it, life has no sufficient object, and death has no hope, and eternity no promise.

American Unitarian Association, 25 *Beacon Street*, Boston.

LIFE OF

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, D.D.

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AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

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CHRISTIAN UNITY.

BY CHARLES F. DOLE.

If you want to get the great common facts of science, you have to throw out every thing in which scientific men differ, and simply to see where all are agreed, and you call this common ground *essential truth*. Just so, when we take a number of Christian men of all sorts, customs, and creeds, and throw out every thing in which they differ, and keep the things where they are all one, we find the essential creed which we seek. We can easily agree now upon the great and simple elements of our Common Christianity.

We assume together to begin with the belief in God and the hope of immortality. We all believe in the great Power from whom our lives spring, the source of goodness, the abiding truth and love, whom we call by the sacred name of Our Father. We all hope for the eternal life of joy, of growth, of service, and love. Our next common point, then, is the Bible. We all alike go to the Bible, as the highest religious inspiration, — go to it for sympathy and comfort, for lessons of truth and righteousness, for examples of holy living; and we all alike love it as the best book which we know in the world. For the fact is, whatever our varying theories about it, we all get good out of the Bible, get help, and stirring towards God, as we get good out of no other book.

My next point is with regard to Jesus Christ. We agree about Christ more than the widest of us differ. We are one in taking his life as our model, in loving his words, and in seeing in him a revelation of God. We agree, — the widest of us agree, — that if he, or such as he,

could come again into the world, we should hail him and love him. We agree in our allegiance to what he said was his work, — the lifting all men into a kingdom of righteousness. In short, all differences of opinion about him are metaphysical abstractions, compared to the common fact, that all Christians want to have their lives like the ideal which they have of this Christ.

Our next point of agreement is the Christian life itself. We believe that there is such a thing as a life of love. We use different language to express it; but what of that? If one and another only succeed in helping bad men to be good; proud, conceited men to be humble; selfish men to give up their selfish wills; dishonest men to make restitution; if they only succeed in making men see the need and the goodness of living as Jesus lived!

Another common point is the belief in retribution. Some people think they know a deal more of heaven and hell than they know of this earth, and that God has clearly revealed all about the details of these things. No matter for that. The common fact lies open before us. We all agree that a man can never do wrong and not, somewhere or some time, suffer the just and inevitable penalty; and no one who thinks it safe to do wrong has caught the idea of a Christian.

Again, we agree that we all need God's help to be Christians. Some prefer to say we need *special* help, and some think we need help constantly, that it is through the fact of God's help that we live at all. What difference does it make, when we all recognize Him as the giver of every good gift, and the inspirer of every thought, to whom we come as naturally as children?

One further point. It is the idea of forgiveness. The peculiarity of Christianity has always been that it gave every man a new chance. It came to the man who had wandered and sinned, and it said, 'Turn about and do

right, and God's love and man's love shall attend you again. Break off the bad life, and God will give you a new." We say this in ten thousand pulpits to-day. People have various theories how this can be; and some of us simply say, that such is the wonderful nature of love, that it was such before Christ, and that he only showed it more plainly. All speak of the fact, and all carry it back to the goodness of God.

Now we find every one of these things in every man whose life makes any just claim to be Christian. But as soon as we go beyond these simple articles, we find hopeless difference in beliefs and in customs. We therefore rightly infer that these things are essential. Does any one still ask, "Are you quite sure these simple elements are enough?" We know that they are enough, just as we know that bread and meat and fruit are enough for our food, that these things are essential, and that pastry, nuts, and wines are at best only luxuries.

Just so we know that a man cannot believe in God in any real sense, however different from our own and under any different name; or hope for immortality, whatever his ground for it; or truly care for the Bible and love it; or look up to Jesus, if only as much as a wonderful teacher; or strive for a Christ-like life; or fear, for whatever reason, to do a wrong thing; or ever, feeling his needs, pray for God's help; or catch the thought of a new life through forgiveness, — I say no man can have a gleam of one of these thoughts, and not bring forth some true fruit of the Spirit in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, faith, and temperance. And the more you consider, the more you will find that all the other articles of our different creeds are only other forms — and some of them possibly dead and confusing forms — to express these simple Christian principles.

For you see these common things all confessedly help

towards Christian character, but the other things on which we differ cannot one of them be shown to be a kind of help on which character really depends; and, fairly faced, I cannot see how any one can get around this plain fact, or, indeed, why he should want to get around it.

I seem, therefore, to hear a deeper call to our conflicting Christian sects and parties than any human battle-cry. Already it sounds in our ears in the moments when we try to listen to God; and, when this call comes, all other sounds of discord and variance are hushed into silence. It seems to say to us something like this: You believe in a God of law and love: *live*, then, as though you believed. You hold the mighty hope of eternal life: take the joy of that hope and live in its light. You believe in the life of Jesus, and you want such a life for yourself: *strive*, then, to enter the kingdom of goodness, whose glory he saw. You believe that every sin hurts your own soul and harms your fellows: oh! then, turn from all that is evil, and take God's present help to live this new life!

These words come home to our consciences. They mean reality. They mean earnestness. They mean charity; and, thank God, they mean harmony and growing love for each other.

American Unitarian Association, 25 *Beacon Street*, Boston.

A STORY OF THE PRAIRIES.

BY ROBERT COLLYER.

WHEN I went to see "Jasper" once, and help dedicate a little church he had built, with his own means in part, I heard a very touching story I would love to tell, if I were able, just as it was told to me: —

We had to ride ten miles to the meeting-house; and, about half-way on our journey, came to a farm-house on the prairie which will always stay with me now as more than a mere dwelling, as a battle-field is more than a field; especially if, like some such places, it is the ground where a battle was fought between good and evil, and victory crowned the good.

That farm, my friend said, belongs to an old settler who has lived without God in the world, so far as a man can live without him who pays his way and works his stint. A good many years ago, he lost his first wife, by whom he had three sons; since then, he married again, and had more children; but has always declared he did not believe in God, or Christ, or a revelation, or religion, or churches, or the life to come. It was not merely a *doubt* about these matters he would express whenever he got a chance, but a round and complete *denial*, on which he rested as a distinction to be proud of. He raised his sons in his own way; his unbelief was their catechism and creed. They were seldom seen in a church or Sunday school; and, as they grew up to manhood, they spent their Sundays hunting and rambling around the country, to the sore annoyance, now and then, of little knots of worshippers disturbed by their racket.

One Sunday my friend went to preach at a woods meeting close to a small church he had opened in the skirts of the wilderness; and, as he was about to close his sermon, was startled to see one of these young men pushing his way through the crowd to the platform. "I can see him as I talk to you," Jasper said, — "tall, about twenty-eight; not the stalwart fellow I used to know, but a bent and broken man, with great eyes full of a strange light, and with a firm mouth; and, as he came up the steps, I saw in his face a tender yet intense purpose, which seemed almost awful in such a man. He was dressed in his week-day clothes, and was without a coat; and I remember the look of wonder all about me; for the people knew no more what to make of it than I did."

The preacher went on with his sermon, while the young man took a seat behind; and, as soon as he had breath to speak, leaned forward, touched him, and said: "Jasper, will you tell the folks I want to speak to them this afternoon? I have something to say to them, as an outsider, which I hope may do some good."

My friend was startled, of course. He had no idea what the sick man wanted to say. It was not unfair to infer, from what he had known of him, that he might want to tell the folks that this talk about God and religion was all nonsense. But Jasper never was the man to back out of a fight for the eternal verities; and then he must have been touched by that tender shining in the young man's face; and so, the moment he was through, he said, "John wants to speak to us this afternoon, he says, *as an outsider;* and I propose we hear him."

As they sat at dinner under the trees, there was only one thing they could talk about, and this was, "What can Johnny have to say to us?" They knew he had but little education, and was about the last man in the county to address a public meeting of any kind; and, as

Jasper sat eating his dinner and hearing what was said, his heart sank a little; for he feared he had made a mistake in giving up his second service.

When the meeting gathered, the friends, whose hearts were softened for the sick man, agreed he should have the chapel, as he was clearly too weak to speak in the open air. They felt that, whether he wanted to speak for or against them, he must be treated with all courtesy. It was clear also he could not stand to talk long, so they set a chair on the platform for him. The people flocked in, filled every foot of standing-room, and crowded about the windows outside. Then John began to speak. Jasper wrote out the address next morning as near as he could recall it, and I copy now from his notes: —

"Friends, I ain't a member of no church, and never was; so I want to speak to you as an *outsider*. I never had no religious training, nor much schoolin', and I grew up a wild boy. I used to 'tend Sunday school once in a while; but I never belonged to no class; I set on one side and got all the fun I could; and that was what I went for. Then, when I grew older, I began to horse-race, and drink, and gamble; and instead of going to meetin' Sundays, I hunted foxes, and shot squirrels and deer. I reckon you have heerd us hunting foxes through these woods, while you were holding meetin' right here; and that was the way I come up. You may some of you thought I was happy. I wasn't: I was troubled all the time; and now, when I think of it, I feel sick of the way I spent my youth My health is gone; my body is a skeleton. I want you to see how thin I be: look at that arm! And I hardly have breath to talk; but I felt I must come here to-day and tell you my story.

"Over a year ago I made up my mind to quit gambling, and drinking, and hard swearing, anyhow; but it was awful hard work. Then I thought I would join church, and see if that was any help; but I thought my brother had wronged me about some property, and I hated him like fury; so you see I could not join a church while I felt that way, and I had to give up the idea. I got to hate that brother, so I made up my mind to kill

him, and went and borrowed a gun to shoot him; but I couldn't do it. Somehow I guess my conscience went agin me, — seems as if that was the way; but I had an awful time of it, — weeks and months miserable as a man could be.

"O you parents," he cried then, with anguish in his tones, "I want to say a word now to you. You hev children; you must love them. Will you let me beg you to show your love by raising them different to what I was raised, and save them from all that misery?

"One Sunday, when I was feeling that way, I come here to meetin' to hear Jasper preach; and it seemed like the sermon was aimed right at me; I was hit sure. So I went home and got my mother's old Bible out, and went to reading and studying of it, 'most night and day, and feeling worse'n ever. Every thing was so dark and bad. I didn't know where to turn. One night last week, I was lying on my bed, — all over suffering and pain; and all of a sudden that black cloud cleared! The load was lifted off my heart, and there seemed to be a great light in which every thing come out plain. I wanted to get up and hunt my brother, and tell him we must forgive each other right there. But I did not like to wake him. Then, the first time for a long while, I fell asleep sweet and still as you ever saw. I did not feel much sick any more, — slept right on to morning. Then I got up and dressed, went to find my brother, and we fixed things right away. Seems as if he was just as pleased as I was to make up and shake hands.

"So I have come here to join this meetin', if you will take me in after I tell you just the way I believe. Some will laugh at me, I know, for joining meetin'; and some won't like it. I can't help that, and it is not my lookout. I don't know much; but I notice those who are trying real hard to live better lives in this section join a meetin'. Some of you will say, as I used to say, 'Church-members ain't no better than outsiders.' Well, I know joining church don't make a man no better, when he don't try real hard to lead a better life. Some church-members is the meanest folks I ever knew; but then some is the best folks I ever knew. There is folks in meetin' whose ways I don't like, and there is folks out of meetin' whose ways I don't like. So I think the reasons is as good for going in as

staying out, anyhow. But I do find that my best friends — them that have been truest to me every time — are members of meetin' or believe in it. So I know what I want to do.

"Now I want to tell you what I believe. There's the Bible. Some of you know how we used to say, 'The Bible is nothin' but the works of men like us.' I have fixed that up in my own mind this way: If the Bible is the works of men, it's a first-rate book any way. I have been reading it, pretty much night and day, for a good spell, now; and the more I read the better it grows. I don't know no man, nor no set of men, that I think could begin to make as good a book now. And I don't see how men ever could make such a book, the way it comes to me, without some higher Power somewheres to help them. But, if men like we are did make it, I am willing to be guided by as good as they were, until I can do better myself.

"Then there's heaven. I think there's two heavens and two hells: one here and one hereafter, both kinds; and I have been in both down here, but mostly in hell. I never expect to find a worse hell yonder than I lived in here before God took me to heaven last week.

"And some of you folks say there's no falling from grace. I cannot think so. I got a mite of it by two years' hard work, and felt I was a little ways toward heaven; but when I got hating my brother so, I lost what little I had made and went right down into hell, worse'n ever. But, while I talk to you, I am in heaven. I am full of pain and just on the edge of my grave; but there's no comparison the way I feel now and the way I used to feel, when you used to see me healthy and strong, with every thing my own way, a thrashing round.

"So I have come here to join church. You will think I mean Jasper's church, but I don't. If Jasper had a church and he should die, the church would die, because the body ain't nothin' without a head. I want to join this branch of Jesus Christ's church, where Jasper is the minister. Jesus Christ said, 'I am the vine and ye are the branches;' and I want to be grafted into this branch, if you will take me."

He tried to go on and tell them about his faith in the life to come; and how it had come to him at last of its

own accord clear and sure as sunshine; but he was now so exhausted, that, though the people were all wrapped in a wonder, and strong men to whom tears were strange were weeping like children, there was such a power and pathos in his tones, and such a light on his face, as he spoke to them, yet they saw he was fainting. Two thoughtful men had sprung up some time before to hold him in his chair, as he battled for strength to say his last words; so they all begged him now to stop, for he had fully told his story. Then Jasper said to him, when his strength had come back a little, "Brother, will you make this Bible, by the best light which comes to you, the rule of your faith and practice? and will you make a sincere desire to follow Christ your only test of Christian fellowship?" He whispered, "I will." "Then," said Jasper again, "I want you, Christian men and women of every name, who have heard John's confession, and are willing to admit him to the church of the living God, to stand on your feet." There were Methodists there, and Baptists, and others of other names; but they were so lifted out of their abiding-places, as God stole the dogmas out of their hearts by that baptism of fire and tears, that they all stood up as one man. The doors swung wide open, and there was plenty of room for the humble, pleading, free, Christian thinker, who on the far edge of life would only spell the truth out painfully for himself by that light which is not of the sun: and then they all went home.

There is little more to tell. My friend went to see him next day, and all he could say about it was, "Jasper, something higher than myself sent me to the grove yesterday, and told me what to say. It was the last chance; I can never speak again. If I get strong enough, I should like to go and be baptized; but if that cannot be, it makes little matter, because the other baptism was the great thing, you know, after all. I *should* like to live,

to make some little amends for my life; but I have to leave all that with God now. He must do what seems best. I feel I am near my end."

And indeed this was the end. He rapidly grew weaker after that. The good folks all about flocked to see him; and they tell still of the bright, quiet atmosphere which was about him as a breath of heaven, strangely changing the poor little farm-house, that had been so desolate and so shut out from the better life since the mother left her children to the tender mercies of a home without God. He was simple, restful, and sunny-hearted all day long, for he was in that land of Beulah which Bunyan saw, where the pilgrims rest for a space in the sunshine before they go into the river. Only once he showed a touch of temper. A preacher came to see him, and insisted on talking in a mournful way about the future. He could not bear that; I think he must have felt it was an insult to the mighty love of God that had plucked him as a brand from the burning, or as if one should come and talk to one of our children mournfully about their home. But the heavens did not hide the earth as yet. He thought of every thing a man ought to see to, and put his house in order; and then, on the day which was to know no night, he whispered, "Jasper, it is all right, — all clear ahead. I feel sure I shall soon see my mother now." And I think the mother was saying that very instant, "Now I shall soon see my boy." On a gusty November day, as the first snow was falling, they laid what was left away in the lonely little cemetery, and the snow came down and covered the grave with a robe as white as that John wears,

> "Where angels gather immortality
> From life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God."

THE American Unitarian Association is the working missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It seeks to promote sympathy and united action among Liberal Christians, and to spread the principles which are believed by Unitarians to be essential to civil and religious liberty and progress and to the attainments of the spiritual life. To this end it supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes, sells, and gives away books, sermons, tracts, hymn-books, and devotional works.

Tracts descriptive of Unitarian principles, doctrines, and methods, are sent free to any who desire to know what Liberal Christianity stands for and works for. A list of these free tracts will be sent on application. A full descriptive catalogue of the publications of the Association, including doctrinal, devotional, and practical works, will be sent to all who apply. All religious books by Unitarian authors are kept on sale, and will be sent on receipt of price. A list of such books, with prices, will be furnished upon request.

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FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath to the American Unitarian Association, a corporation established by law in the State of Massachusetts, the sum of.....dollars.

HYMNS.

BY CHARLES G. AMES, D.D.

LORD'S PRAYER.

Air.—"Almost Persuaded."

FATHER in heaven, hear us to-day;
Hallowed Thy name be; hear us, we pray!
Oh, let Thy kingdom come!
Oh, let Thy will be done
By all below the sun
As in the skies.

Father in heaven, hear us to-day;
Hallowed Thy name be; hear us, we pray!
Giver of daily food,
Fountain of truth and good,
Be all our hearts imbued
With love like Thine.

Father in heaven, hear us to-day;
Hallowed Thy name be; hear us, we pray!
Lead us in paths of right,
Save us from sin and blight,
King of all love and might,
Glorious for aye.

EDEN COMES AGAIN.

Air. — "Hold the Fort."

"Arise, shine! for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." — Isaiah lx. 1.

Lo! the day of God is breaking;
Light is in the sky!
See the world to life awaking:
Morning draweth nigh!

Chorus.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Eden comes again;
Glory, glory in the highest,
God will dwell with men!

Now the powers of wrong and darkness
Lose their stolen crown;
Now the foot of the archangel
Treads the dragon down.

Ancient forms of woe and error
Flee before the light;
And the cruel creeds of terror
Vanish with the night.

He will gives us songs for sadness;
Wipe our tears away;
Turn our mourning into gladness,
And our night to day.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

Air. — "The Old, Old Story."

TELL me the old, old story
Of unseen things above,
Of heavenly grace and glory
Of heavenly power and love.
Tell me the gospel message, —
God loves and seeks His child,
Though sunk in sin and sorrow,
Or lost in deserts wild.

Chorus.

Tell me the old, old story
Of heavenly grace and glory ;
Tell me the old, old story
Of heavenly power and love.

Tell me of living waters
That clear from the fountain burst,
To refresh the fainting spirit,
For, oh ! I thirst ! I thirst !
Weary and weak, I've wandered
O'er dry and barren sand ;
Oh ! show me the royal highway
That leads to the better land.

Chorus. — Tell me the old, old story, &c.

Show me the living pastures
Where the flocks of God are fed,
Show me the faithful Shepherd
By whom each lamb is led.
Will he forsake the straying?
Or spurn the weak and small?
Oh! sure His fold and heart-room
Are large enough for all.

Chorus. — Tell me the old, old story, &c.

Listen, O weary wanderer,
To the still small voice within,
'Twill show the way thou seekest,
And lead Thee out of sin.
For he who spake in Jesus,
And all the saints of old,
Is the ever-present Shepherd
Who calls Thee to his fold.

Chorus

God, within and o'er thee,
The God of grace and glory,
Tells thee His own story
Of heavenly power and love.

American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

JUDGMENT-DAYS.

By Rush R. Shippen.

The theological idea of a single judgment-day for all the generations of mankind makes the event so distant and unreal that it is losing its hold on popular belief.

Is there then no judgment-day? Yes; many. Not once only, after death; but here, and hereafter, judgment-days surely come to every soul.

Experience and Scripture alike declare the law of retribution and the fact of judgment. We reap what we sow. Thorns never produce grapes, nor thistles figs. The harvests for ever answer to the kind of seed planted. The reward is to every man according as his work shall be. A book of remembrance is written. A cloud of witnesses surrounds us. Our sins find us out. By spiritual gravitation, every soul, as surely as did Judas, goes to his own place. The lines of divine justice run through earth and eternity, separating the false from the true, the evil from the good, for ever pronouncing doom to the wicked, and to the faithful, "Well done." By a variety of imagery, — wise virgins and foolish, wheat and tares, sheep and goats, — the Scriptures vividly portray this grand spiritual process for ever going on in the divine government of the universe, of weighing and measuring and separating souls, and meting out their just deserts. They borrow the visible forms of our august processes of justice, — the court, the bench, the judge, the witnesses; and, in dramatic He-

brew style, these universal laws are concentrated into the idea of a judgment-day and a judgment-seat; declaring the solemn fact that every work and every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil, God shall bring into judgment; and erecting for us the Christian standard of justice, by declaring that we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

For retribution may for a time be hidden, or its results apparently delayed and slow to culminate. The seeds of sin or virtue require many days to ripen and show their fruit. Soon or late, however, the autumn surely tells the quality of the spring-time planting. Crises come, that test the life principle, that disclose the record and reveal the secrets, balance accounts to our honor or our shame, and mete out the righteous penalty or reward. These are the soul's judgment-days.

The popular belief in a judgment-day, as if there were but one, and that one beyond the grave, lessens the Scripture meaning. It perverts and dwindles into a single literal event far away and unreal this Oriental imagery of the august justice dealing with us to-day and for ever. It loses sight of that living law by which sin poisons and burns up the spiritual nature, while virtue gravitates heavenward; by which all wrong is condemned, whether in Buddhist Hindostan, or Orthodox America, and all piety, whether of Pagan or Christian, of Socrates or Calvin, wins the divine approval.

It portrays God on the throne as a vindictive despot, his wrath placated by the blood of innocent victims, even by the foul murder of his best-beloved Son; and Christ himself judging souls by arbitrary, technical tests that do not touch character or destiny. Punctilious

ritualism, a creed shibboleth, or the momentary enthusiasm of a death-bed conversion is accepted as the substitute for a well-spent life. The pious heathen or saintly heretic is rejected; while many a stained character is elected into bliss. Not by personal purity, but by Christ's payment of our penalty, this unnatural judgment-hall gives passport to glory.

Andrea Orcagna, in the Campo Santo at Pisa, and Michael Angelo, in the Sistine Chapel at Rome, paint the grim doctrine into fierce pictures of lost souls hopelessly writhing in the terrible torture of the burning gulf, and of Christ as judge, with uplifted, menacing hand thrusting back the miserable mortals who approach, suppliants for mercy, — an attitude utterly repugnant to Christ's character or God's good Spirit, — a libel on the gospel and on the Father of all souls. Thus the divine judgment is caricatured, and becomes a far-away, unnatural doctrine, whose force is lost in its unreality. So that men, who shrink from fire because it burns, or from arsenic because it poisons, recklessly brave that invisible justice which, soon or late, just as surely and relentlessly as fire and poison, brings every soul to judgment.

Away then with the crude theological fiction of a single, far off, visible judgment-day, that spoils the Scripture significance and blinds men to the eternal law! and see the solemn fact that the Bible declares. In every man's career come occasions that are turning-points of destiny. The past life is summed up: the accounts are balanced: the man is freshly weighed and measured: his secret life revealed: his real worth published: and he is doomed with the disgrace or crowned with the honor prepared by the thoughts and words and deeds of by-gone years. These important crises!

What are they? From the Greek *criteo*, to judge: the very root of the word tells us that a *crisis* is a judgment-day.

These crises come in this world. Great events, new duties, fresh trials, severe temptations, enlarging opportunities test our moral manhood, gauge and publish our spiritual strength or weakness, our fidelity to conscience, our faith in God and immortality, our loyalty or our treason. In Scripture figures: The door of opportunity opens. The wise, with lamps trimmed and burning, pass in; while the silly triflers lose their chance, and find *that* door shut for evermore. The wheat and tares grow together; the autumn reveals the difference. The great threshing-floor of time and events is for ever winnowing the chaff from the grain. Before the divine law, no wrong goes unavenged, no virtue unrewarded. It needs no vindictive decree, no visible barrier, no formal process to separate sheep from goats, the false from the true. By their different tastes, aims, and pursuits, by their course of life, habits of thought, and quality of character and inner spirit, they separate themselves. Dwelling in the same town, in the same church, in the same house, in their deeper life they are as unlike as white and black; they are as far apart as the zenith and the nadir. The workers of iniquity alienate themselves from truth and right, from God and the fellowship of good men; and place between themselves and happiness a deep, dark gulf, which in all eternity can be crossed only by repentance, pardon, and reform. No cruel decree but the law of the universe is for ever saying to workers of iniquity, "Depart ye!" While the very constitution of things, the voices of destiny, all the forces of the spiritual world are for ever inviting the good man, "Come, ye

blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!"

The real truth and teaching of the Bible thus unfold the religion of common sense and practical experience. Our theologies and religious forms and methods are tried by the searching test; — Do they make men better here and now? Do they save us from the sin that will first or last find us out and send every soul up or down to his own place? from the sin that is to be dreaded like flame and arsenic because to the soul it is fire and poison? Our judgment-days do not wait for death and another world. They come to nations. Jerusalem found hers in the terrible destruction wrought by Titus and described by Josephus, that so fearfully fulfilled the sad forebodings of Jesus. Despotism and slavery found theirs in the French Revolution and the American Rebellion. And, whether in some convulsive exposure of crime, or in the quiet and unseen harvesting of destiny, we are all even now standing at the judgment-bar of the living God.

When disrobed of mortality and this world's fortune, accident and circumstance left behind, and the soul must pass for what it nakedly is, what a searching ordeal shall be that new day that sums up the deeds done in the body, takes us as in our innermost selves we really are, and sends Dives and Lazarus alike each to his own true place. And along the eternal pilgrimage must come many another judgment-day, till the lash of retribution shall turn the sinner from his iniquity, while the smile of the divine favor for ever beckons the good man as he passes up and on from grace to glory, "Come up higher!"

American Unitarian Association, 25 *Beacon Street*, *Boston*.

ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS

In Religion.

By JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

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AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

THE UNITARIAN AIM.

By Rev. Charles A. Allen.

"One hope, one faith, one love, restore
The seamless robe that Jesus wore."

Sometimes a railroad train, moving rapidly, comes to a misplaced switch, and runs off on a wrong track. We can imagine it possible that, in a heavy fog, such a train might run for many miles on some branch road, far away from its true route, without the mistake being observed.

Christianity was switched off in somewhat this fashion, pretty early in its history, and has been running on the wrong track for many centuries. Originally, it was a great *spiritual* movement, an effort to reform and regenerate human life. The genius of the race that gave birth to Christianity was intensely practical. The true Hebrew cared for no doctrine, unless this had an immediate application to character and life; to fear God and keep His commandments was the whole of religion. And Christianity was the child of Judaism, with Hebrew blood alone in her veins, full of the same intensely practical spirit, and aiming at the same great object.

In the ministry of Jesus there is not the least trace of *dogmatism*, — that is, of insistence upon such doctrines as the creeds are made of. The truth to which he bore constant witness, even to a martyr's death, was not truth of doctrine, but truth of *character* (John xviii. 37). He rebuked all attempts to draw him into doctrinal discussion, and turned the thoughts of his hearers to some practical subject, — as when he was questioned with regard to the mystery of Providence in such an accident as the fall of the Tower in Siloam (Luke xiii. 4). He opposed, not doctrinal errors, but *the false spirit and life* that were corrupting the nation (Matt. v. 20; xv. 7, 14; xxiii. 13). It reveals the real aim of his ministry in the clearest light to observe that he only once (Matt. xvi. 3), and then simply on account of their hypocrisy, attacked the Sadducees, who were the doctrinal unbelievers of the time, — mere sceptics,

who doubted immortality and were probably to a great extent what we should call to-day agnostics and even materialists; but he severely and often assailed the Pharisees, who believed enough, but were false-hearted and faithless. The only unbelief that he ever denounced was *the unbelief of hypocrisy*. (Compare "hypocrites" in Matt. xxiv. 51, with "unbelievers" in Luke xii. 46. "Doctrine," in Matt. xvi. 12, is "practical teaching.")

But when this great religious impulse, which his word and life originated, continued to extend itself after his crucifixion, it at last overleaped the bounds of the Hebrew race and rapidly spread through the civilized world of that time, which was all thoroughly Greek in mental habits. Christianity was then turned aside from the course which Jesus had intended. For five hundred years the Greek race had been intensely interested in speculative questions, and had developed systems of philosophy which have instructed the world ever since. This new spiritual movement, which we call Christianity, drew into its current many who were familiar with all these philosophic systems, and whose predisposition was very strong to look at the speculative instead of the practical aspect of life, — to theorize and explain rather than to rise to a nobler personal life. The intense earnestness of Christianity, which in the New Testament is intent on awakening in men a spirit of obedience and trust toward God, and thus regenerating human life, became a zeal for correct doctrines. And the emphasis that the New Testament lays upon "faith," or the right religious spirit, as the essential condition of the highest welfare here and hereafter, was changed to a bigoted insistence on correct belief as necessary for obtaining God's favor here and making sure of heaven hereafter.

As the very momentum of a railroad train, that will carry it swiftly and safely to its destination if it keeps the right track, may, on the other hand, hurl it to destruction and cause the most agonizing sufferings to the passengers, if it is switched off by mistake, so the tremendous earnestness that Christianity breathed into the hearts of its disciples, the zeal for saving souls and glorifying God, made the bigotry that the Church fell into, in consequence of this misunderstanding of "faith," a thousandfold more bitter than it would otherwise have been, and made Christianity, thus perverted, one of the worst instruments of mischief and misery that the world has ever known

And still, as long as "faith" is understood to mean correct belief, dogmatism and bigotry and even persecution are logically inevitable. The Roman Catholic Church, with true consistency, has often asserted its supposed duty to compel assent to the dogmas of the Church, on the ground that correct belief is necessary for salvation, and that the Church is bound to use every means for the salvation of souls, even to the burning of the bodies of heretics, so that their damnable errors may be crushed, and the world be delivered from the frightful peril — as that Church regards it — of false doctrine.

But it is the plain duty of the Christian Church to return to the right track, from which it was so early turned aside. It must study the New Testament more intelligently, clearing its eyesight of the dogmatic prejudices which the influence of Greek philosophy first infused, and recognizing that, in true Christianity, doctrinal belief is of less importance, but *the right spirit and life are vital.*

This has been the great aim of Unitarianism. It has been a protest against all these schisms which dogmatism and bigotry have created. It has been an earnest plea for Christian unity, for *the only unity* that history has shown to be possible, "the unity of the Spirit" (Eph. iv. 3). Eighteen centuries have conclusively proved that the Christian world can never be united on creed or rite. There are *true saints* in every branch of the Christian Church and even outside of the nominally Christian fellowship, who are all disciples of the one Master, but who cannot agree in their doctrinal beliefs or their modes of worship. These true disciples can be brought together in that "kingdom of God" which is true Christianity, the Communion of the Saints, only as they study more intelligently the words of the Master and receive his spirit. And when they can see that Jesus never required any uniformity of creed and never insisted upon any rites; that he left all these matters of doctrine and worship — the mere externals of religion — to every disciple's conscientious conviction, in absolute liberty, responsible to God alone; that he asked only the right spirit and life, of love to God and man; that a surrender of the heart to his spirit and a co-operation with him in his divine work, was what he meant by "faith" in him, and "following" him, and "believing" in him; and that, *not a creed*, but *a life*, not a doctrinal belief *about* him, but a practical

acceptance of his divine spirit, an earnest loyalty to his divine ideals, and a taking sides with him in the great struggle of righteousness and love against worldliness and wrong, even though it be without any verbal profession of discipleship (Matt. vii. 21 ; xxv. 31–46), was what he meant in asking them to "confess" him to be "the Christ," — then they will understand the gospel as Jesus himself preached it, and become truly his disciples and fellow-laborers.

Unitarianism has been always pleading for this "unity of the Spirit," — not undervaluing the real importance of correct beliefs, but insisting that the right spirit and life are *more* important. Only by this sympathy in the Christlike spirit can all Christians be brought together to labor, as the Master would have them labor, for the salvation and uplifting of humanity. Therefore it is, that Unitarianism has protested against creeds, when these are made tests of personal Christianity and causes of division in the "body of Christ." Therefore it is, that it has insisted on *character* as more important than creed or rite ; on the spirit of loyalty and trust as the essence of "faith ;" and on the *filial* spirit toward God, "the spirit of adoption," in Paul's phrase, as the essence of *Christian* faith. It recognizes also the importance of repentance, regeneration, conversion ; but it cannot insist upon any particular theory of these great experiences, or require that all Christian experiences shall be of exactly the same type. It is content, if it finds "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22) ; this is sufficient evidence of a true repentance and regeneration. It would, therefore, include in the Christian fellowship all in whom is manifested *the spirit of Christ*, and who are sincerely trying to be Christlike, — all who can sincerely offer *the Lord's Prayer*, which, rather than any creed, is *the true test* of Christianity. For of such is the kingdom of God ; and whom God accepts we cannot refuse.

"From scheme and creed the light goes out,
The *saintly fact* survives ;
The blessed Master none can doubt,
Revealed in holy lives."

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WHO WAS JESUS CHRIST?

BY REV. CHARLES A. ALLEN.

"O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate'er our name or sign!
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine."

WHO was Jesus Christ? Certainly *no "mere man,"* in the sense of being no better, no wiser, than other men. The vast influence of his personality in human history proves something extraordinary in his life. Sceptics as well as Christians acknowledge the sublimity of his character. The holiest and the wisest, wherever his name has been known, have confessed that here was one who was holier and wiser than they. To-day no name awakens such reverence, kindles such enthusiasm, commands such adoration, imparts such spiritual wisdom and power.

And yet the Church has always insisted on his *true humanity*. He was no mere phantom, no mere angel, "which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities"; but he was a true man, "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. iv. 15). He was "flesh and blood," "in all things made like unto his brethren" (Heb. ii. 17). He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke ii. 52), and "learned obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. v. 8), attaining his marvellous perfection by gradual development in the varied experiences of life, just as we also attain whatever Christlikeness we possess. He longed for human sympathy; he shuddered at the loneliness of his life; he shrank from the bitter cup in Gethsemane. His life was thus in all respects sincerely human.

But even in his true humanity there was *a mystery*. No other man ever spoke, as he often spoke, of an abiding consciousness of God's presence within him. No other man ever lived in so lofty heights of communion with God. No other man ever seemed so overflowing and outshining with a glory of holiness, like the Shekinah by which God made His presence visible in the ancient temple.

How shall we *explain* this mystery? We cannot explain it. The great mistake of the Church since the Apostles' time has been its trying to explain what in the nature of things cannot be explained. *Life is always mysterious*, — even the life of the lowliest flower or the tiniest insect, — much more that "life hidden in God," which glows on saintly features and shines in saintly deeds. Even in our own lives there are heights and depths, — illimitable mysteries even to ourselves, — which we cannot explain, and which somehow open out into the infinite mystery of God.

The Apostolic Church, far wiser than the Church has since been, never tried to explain the mystery of this life. We find in the New Testament no such definitions as were framed in the inquisitive and unspiritual ages that followed. We find no distinction made between the human nature and the divine nature of Jesus, or between the three "persons" in the Godhead. These are the conjectures of a later age. The Apostolic Age had no such conceit of philosophic knowledge as those ages had that framed the ancient creeds of the Church and invented the doctrine of the Trinity. Yet the Apostolic Age knew far more of "the mystery of godliness," and shared far more of "the mind of Christ," than those later ages ever did.

But the Apostolic Church had a profound conviction that the divineness indwelling in Jesus, this spirit of holiness, this mystery of godliness, was *capable of being communicated* from him to his disciples, so that God might indeed abide in some degree in other souls, even as He abode in Jesus. For *goodness and unselfish love*, in any human life, are the "real presence" of God. Did an Apostle say that in Jesus "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead"? The same Apostle prayed for his disciples that they also should "be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. iii. 19). Did another Apostle speak of Jesus as knowing all things? The same Apostle wrote to his disciples, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John ii. 20). Did Jesus say, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me"? The Apostle who recorded this also said, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 John iv. 16). Did Jesus say, "I and my Father are one"? He also prayed that his disciples might be one with God, "even as we are one" (John xvii. 22). Was he the Son

of God? He was "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. viii. 29), and all who are "led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14).

It is evident also that, whatever this indwelling divineness may have been, it did not make him "equal with God." For instance, it did not make him strictly omniscient, since he affirmed that "the Father only," as distinguished from "the Son," could predict the judgment day (Mark xiii. 32).

This indwelling divineness was called "the Father," or "the Word," or "the Spirit" (John xiv. 10; i. 14; iii. 34), and is the Only True God (John xvii. 1–3; 1 Cor. xv. 24). "The Word" was not Jesus himself, but the Divine Manifestation, God-revealing-Himself, which in some degree "lighteth *every* man" (John i. 9), and was "made flesh," or fully manifested, in Jesus; for the Apostles taught that "God was *in* Christ" (2 Cor. v. 19), *not* that Christ was God. The divineness *in* Jesus, not the deity *of* Jesus, is the true Christian doctrine. There is *no* "*God the Son*" in the New Testament. The Son is always subject to God (1 Cor. xv. 28); and he is seen in symbolic vision, not as God, but as a glorified human form, "standing on the right hand of God," His prime minister, so to speak (Acts vii. 55), in token that his religion of truth and love is divinely destined to conquer the world.

And ever since, in theory at least, the Church has insisted, I said, on his true humanity. To this we must, at any rate, hold fast, though we leave the mystery of his divineness unsolved. Otherwise, his life has no inspiration for us; it cannot help or save. The practical loss of this belief in his true humanity is the perilous mistake into which the Church has frequently fallen, while trying to explain the mystery of his divineness. Often has it lost all clear perception that he was really a man, "made like unto his brethren," and he has become a mere phantom, a floating glory, that had no relation with common humanity, by which the electric current of God's "grace and truth" might flash from his soul into other souls, and make him the world's true Saviour.

We confess, as the Apostolic Church confessed, that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts x. 38); that we behold "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6);

and that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 19). *Is not this sufficient?* Why should we try to measure, with the rule and line of our presumptuous creeds, the heights and depths of this mystery? Why should we try to separate God from man, to distinguish between the human nature and the divine nature of Jesus, and to define at what point the humanity ends and the divineness begins? For God and man are ever inseparable; the divine blends everywhere with the human (John i. 9). Man is God's child, sharing His life, and is never without something of God; all "understanding" and all goodness are His imparted life (Job xxxii. 8).

All attempts to explain this mystery are vain; and to make such mere theories a part of Christianity, as the Church has done in its creeds, is not right; for they draw away our attention from the infinitely more important truths of practical religion, which were the only truths that Jesus ever taught. The world has had enough of definitions and dogmas about Christ; what it still needs is more of Christ's *spirit*. Let us, therefore, imitate the wisdom of the Apostolic Church, by endeavoring, *not to define Christ*, but *to "put on Christ"* (Rom. xiii. 14), receiving into humble and reverent hearts that Holy Spirit which was given to him without measure (John iii. 34), and thus having "Christ formed within" us (Gal. iv. 19). If we merely debate about a dogma, we may meanwhile be losing all the divine life that Jesus can impart; but if we seek, not to explain Christ's nature, but to become Christlike, taking up his cross of humility and following him, which is what the New Testament means by "belief in Christ," we shall find in him the Way that will lead us to the Father (John xiv. 6).

Then, by his revealing the Father, imparting divine life, and lifting us above our sins, Jesus, as the well-beloved Son, will become our Saviour.

"Deep strike thy roots, O Heavenly Vine,
Within our earthly sod,
Most human and yet most divine,
The flower of man and God."

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THE GOSPEL THAT JESUS TAUGHT.

BY REV. CHARLES A. ALLEN.

"Deep below, as high above,
Sweeps the circle of God's Love."

SURELY there is no better way of learning what the Christian gospel really is, than to study the life and words of Jesus, and inquire what principles of religion he taught.

To understand the first and most important of these principles, we must remember the religious state of his people at that time. A false notion of religion had burdened men with intense anxieties. It made them think that, unless they performed certain rites with scrupulous care, they would incur God's wrath. In this way religion became a mere superstition. The religious truth, therefore, that his people *most needed to be taught*, was this: that God does not care for any forms, except as they really express our love and trust towards Him, and really help us to become more religious in spirit; that reliance on ceremonies is not true religion, but mere magic; and that the best *expression* of religion, the true worship and service of God, (and so too, we may say, the true "confession of Christ,") is helping our fellow men and living worthy lives (Jas. i. 27),—or, in other words, we must prove that we are religious by our *real goodness*, and not by any ceremony.

"Not such the service the benignant Father
Requireth at His earthly children's hands;
Not the poor offering of vain rites, but rather
The simple duty man from man demands."

This, then, is the *first* principle of Christ's gospel, the principle that he often taught from the very beginning of his ministry, more frequently, indeed, than any other, just because it was to him the most important principle of religion; namely, that *true religion is simple and spiritual;* that it is not a ceremony, but *a right spirit;* that it is love to God and man, bearing fruit in humility, sincerity, purity justice, self-denia.

and trust. (Matt. v. 3–12; vi. 1–18, 22; vii. 21–27; ix. 13–17; xii. 1–14; xv. 1–20; xxii. 34–40; John iv. 23) And Paul, too, taught this principle as the doctrine of "justification by faith" (Gal. ii. 12–16).

Then there is a *second* principle which Jesus often taught, namely, that *God is love*, even to those who do not love Him (Matt. v. 44–48); that, therefore, we and all men are in this sense His children and can always trust Him as our Heavenly Father, who, even when we are suffering most keenly the punishment of our sins, is really loving us and trying to save us; and that, whenever we truly repent, He immediately forgives us, like the father of the prodigal in the parable, though we may still suffer severely (Matt. vi. 14, 15; Luke xv. 20; xvii. 4).

A *third* principle is, that God is not far away in the skies, but is *always with us*, a sympathizing and helpful Presence (Acts xvii. 27; Matt. vi. 25–34).

Still other truths of religion were taught by Jesus; but these were *the central truths* of his teaching; these were his gospel, or "good news." And how eagerly the people flocked to hear it! It was "glad tidings" indeed. For the Pharisees had laid heavy burdens of ceremonies upon the people; and the people were weary of these burdens, which, as Peter afterwards said, "neither they nor their fathers were able to bear" (Acts xv. 10). Their religion was superstitious, and therefore made them wretched. But by teaching how *simple* and *spiritual* true religion is, and how *tender* and *near* is God's fatherly love, Jesus offered the privilege of deliverance from all this superstition and fear (Rom. viii. 15), — the deliverance which Paul afterwards described as "the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free" (Gal. v. 1). Deliverance from sin he also offered, indeed, by the life-giving power of his revelation of God's love: but deliverance from superstition was what the people *needed first*.

Has even the Christian Church yet really comprehended this gospel that Jesus taught?

If, for instance, it really understood what Jesus said about God's love for all souls (Matt. v. 44–48; Luke xv. 4), would it still believe that any soul can be forever lost?

Consider, too, how the very first principle of his gospel is still denied. Most Christian pulpits still teach that baptism, for instance, is essential, and that the unbaptized are somehow

out of favor with God. This may be Jewish, but surely it is *not Christian*. It is, in principle, precisely what Jesus condemned. It is true that he accepted baptism from John, who was a Jewish reformer; he wished both to honor the ministry of John, and to express his sympathy with the general confession by the people of penitence for national sins. And also, at one time, when John was still preaching and baptizing, Jesus permitted his own disciples to baptize (John iii. 22, 23; iv. 1, 2) But *subsequently*, during his ministry, we *never* hear of the rite being administered *by any one*. Evidently the people ceased to ask for it, when they saw how little the Teacher valued it; for Jesus himself never administered it, nor required it. Probably he would not refuse it; but he evidently regarded it as unessential, as belonging to the dispensation of the Baptist, rather than to "the kingdom of God," that is, Christianity. In the Sermon on the Mount and in his detailed directions to the Twelve Apostles and to the Seventy Evangelists (Matt. x.; Luke x), he says nothing about it, — surely *a strange omission*, if baptism be really as important as the Church has usually made it. And, further, John foretold of Jesus that he should baptize, not with water, as John had baptized, but "with the Holy Spirit" (Matt. iii. 11). This baptism with the Spirit, therefore, this inbreathing of a new and holier life, must be the *only essential* Christian baptism. This must be the meaning of the command to "baptize all nations," in the last verses of Matthew; — or else we must believe that, as is quite probable, these verses were the addition of a later age, like the similar command in the last verses of Mark, which the Revised Version regards as doubtful; — for to suppose that Jesus, in this *only* instance, insisted on a ceremony of any kind as essential, contradicts the first principle of his gospel, as it was taught both by him and by Paul (1 Cor. i. 17). We rightly reverence the ordinance of baptism, as Paul reverenced this ordinance and that of circumcision, when spiritually used to express religious dedication, and not superstitiously insisted on as necessary for obtaining God's favor; but to assert, as many churches do to-day, that no one can be a Christian unless he has been baptized, or to *insist* upon *any* ceremony, such as fasting, or the Lord's Supper, or religious profession, is, *in principle*, precisely what Paul denounced as "perverting the gospel of Christ" (Gal. i. 7; v. 6; vi. 15).

Then there is the confusion of faith with belief, — another superstition, which often perplexes good people. They cannot honestly believe certain dogmas, such as that of the Trinity; and yet they have been taught that "faith" includes a belief in these dogmas, and that God requires this belief, no matter whether it is honest or not. Thus these dogmas encourage dishonesty, and mystify religion. They complicate and confuse what is really very simple. They become to-day precisely what the ceremonies of Judaism were in Christ's time, namely, a needless burden to the conscience, for they burden men with anxieties which have nothing to do with true religion.

But to all who are thus perplexed Christ comes with his gospel, dispelling the darkness and lifting the burdens. True religion, he says, is a very plain matter; the youngest child who has learned to obey and to trust its earthly parents can understand it. God has often "revealed it unto babes" (Matt. xi. 25), when the "wise and prudent" have passed it by, looking for metaphysical dogmas and "deep" theologies.

The Sermon on the Mount, and especially the Beatitudes, tell us what Jesus taught as true religion. It is simply repenting of sin and receiving the forgiveness of our sin, as we forgive those who trespass against us (Matt vi. 14), — trying to live better to-morrow than to-day, because we "hunger and thirst after righteousness," — being sincere and unselfish, just, merciful and pure, or, in other words, *really good*, — and then, in the spirit of a little child, *trusting all* to the Heavenly Father who feeds the birds and clothes the lilies (Matt. vi. 25–34).

This life of *filial* obedience and trust, "the spirit of adoption" (Rom. viii. 15), is the true religion, the true "faith," the essential Christianity, which Jesus taught in his gospel.

"Our Friend, our Brother, and our Lord!
What may thy service be?
Not creed, nor form, nor ritual word,
But simply following thee."

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THE LAYMEN'S LEAGUE.

BY REV. SAMUEL J. BARROWS.

THE object of the Laymen's League is to encourage church attendance. It had its origin in a small town in New England. There are three churches in that town. For the last year or two, any one of these churches could hold the congregations of them all. What was the reason? It was not in this case because there were too many churches for the population: it was because the population did not get into the churches. Why did they not get in? The doors were wide enough, the aisles were ample, the bell rang its Sunday-morning invitation with sonorous solemnity; yet the people did not come. The pastors of these churches were much disturbed by the fact that the larger part of their congregations were outside of the church, when they ought to have been inside. Be it said that the pastors of these churches were not great preachers. There are but few great preachers in a century, and this town was not big enough to hold one. The preaching was earnest and faithful, but it did not draw. The ministers sought eagerly for some magnet. They tried first one thing and then another. Vesper services, praise meetings, lectures, missionary meetings, and various other devices were employed, but with only temporary success. Some of the attractions were a little artificial; others had the effect to create a desire for highly spiced Sunday fare. The ministers were discouraged. So were the deacons. Even the sextons were a little nettled that their brazen-tongued proclamations were not better respected. What

could they do about it? Little or nothing. This was a matter to be decided by the pews; and the pews did decide it.

When the annual meeting of the Monotarian Church at Empty Hollow was held, one of the laymen promptly moved that the church be abandoned. He did not see, he said, that it was worth while supporting a church if nobody went to it. He thought that it would be a good idea to give the minister and the sexton a purse, and let them make a trip to Europe. He believed in supporting the ministry; but as most of the pew-holders contributed money and did not contribute their presence, he did not see why they could not have a minister without the necessity of keeping an empty church. He moved that the minister be retained, but that the church be abandoned.

No sooner had this proposition been made than half a dozen laymen sprang to their feet. With one exception, they were men who were only rarely seen in church. They hired pews and paid for them, they contributed to the support of the various charities of the church; but their pews were habitually empty. These men suddenly discovered that they had a great interest in this church. It was closely identified with the history of the town; their fathers and their grandfathers had worshipped in this very meeting-house; the church was an institution of great importance to the moral and religious health of the community; to abandon it was to abandon a bulwark of civilization. Another confessed that he was a good deal of an agnostic. He did not pretend to be a religious man: he was too fond of staying at home and reading the Sunday paper; but he should be sorry to look out of his window and not see that steeple rising to the sky; he should be sorry not to hear the music of that church bell. Somehow it helped him to know that others believed in the things that he doubted. He would not wish to lay away

one that was dear and near to him without some word or service by a Christian minister pointing to something higher than the grave. Two other laymen confessed their sins of omission, but delivered eloquent speeches in favor of keeping the church open.

Deacon Faithful then arose. His voice trembled. There was a tear in his eye. He had been deacon of that church for forty years. His father had been a deacon before him. Every one knew that the deacon never missed a service when he could drag himself into church. He seemed to be almost a part of its architecture. With slow and measured words, he spoke of the deep pain which the motion to abandon the church gave him. It seemed like a motion to turn him out of house and home. He loved every timber in that church. He did n't come there merely for the good it did the community: he came there for the good he got himself. He did n't come there merely to hear the preaching of the Word, although he laid much store by that; but he came to worship God. He felt that it was good to thank God for the blessings he had received, good to lift his soul in the sacredness of worship: it refreshed him and strengthened him for the duties of the week. Worship was a necessity of his nature, and he did n't want to worship alone. He wanted to meet the people of God in the sanctuary; for had not the Apostle said, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together"?

Deacon Faithful's presence was more eloquent than his words. There was a round of applause when he got through.

Then the original mover of the resolution arose. He said that he was much surprised and greatly gratified at the opposition which his resolution had excited. He had discovered what a deep interest many of the pew-holders of that church had in its existence. There were two ways

of supporting a church: one was by your purse; the other was by your personality. This church had been supported long enough on the purse plan: it was time to try a little personality. These laymen must show their faith by their works. If they really believed in the church for any one of the reasons they had expressed, let them show by their presence that they did believe in it. He wanted not only their dollars, but the hands that gave them. He concluded by withdrawing his resolution, and offering another in its stead: —

Whereas it is the opinion of this meeting that the Monotarian Church in Empty Hollow ought to be supported, —

Resolved, That we will support it.

Resolved, That the pew-holders in this church constitute themselves into a Laymen's League, the object of which shall be to encourage church attendance.

Resolved, That every person who hires a pew in this church virtually agrees to occupy the seat he hires.

Resolved, That we will not only go to church ourselves, but take our children with us.

The mover of the resolution said he wanted this passed by a retail as well as a wholesale vote; he would pass it round for signatures, if adopted by the meeting. The resolution was unanimously passed, and was then signed by every layman present. As the author of it remarked, he wanted the laymen not to subscribe their money so much as to subscribe themselves.

The next Sunday, the sight at the Monotarian Church was an unusual one. Nearly every pew had its representative. There were laymen there who had not been seen inside the church for months. It was evident that the church was pretty strong when its members turned out. The pulpit could not help gaining something of the strength which came from the pews. Deacon Faithful

said he had never known the pastor to preach better. And there was a marked improvement in the singing. The whole service felt the tonic effect of a good congregation.

The organization of the Laymen's League put this church on a good, strong footing. It was, perhaps, rather hard for some of the covenanters, who had not obeyed the Sabbath bell with alacrity for some years, to heed its Sunday-morning summons; but the pledges were well kept, and they soon found it just as easy to go to church Sunday morning at half-past ten as it was to get up and take the eight-o'clock train during the rest of the week.

The organization of the Laymen's League had a good effect on the community. As there was nothing doctrinal or sectarian about it, a companion league was organized in each of the other churches, with a correspondingly good effect. The result has been that many of the people who did not hire pews at all, or profess interest in any church, have been constrained by the example of their neighbors to join the Laymen's League. The non-church-going element in Empty Hollow has been reduced to a small percentage of the population.

Deacon Faithful wishes such a league were formed in every church and every town in the country. It is not necessary, he says, to have any president or secretary, or any other machinery; all that is necessary is to take this pledge to go to church every Sunday, and to keep it.

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Unitarianism and Original Congregationalism in New England

BY

Rev. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
BOSTON

THE American Unitarian Association is the working missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It seeks to promote sympathy and united action among Liberal Christians, and to spread the principles which are believed by Unitarians to be essential to civil and religious liberty and progress and to the attainments of the spiritual life. To this end it supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes, sells, and gives away books, sermons, tracts, hymn-books, and devotional works.

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UNITARIANISM AND ORIGINAL CONGREGATIONALISM IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY REV. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D.

To a serious person who has studied the history of America, nothing is quite so painful as the indifference with which, let me say, in average conversation, even serious men choose to speak of the Congregational churches, of their duties and of their privileges. There is at this moment a clergyman in Boston who has spoken of his taking the ordination of the Presbyterian church or throwing it off, with as much indifference as a man might speak of wearing a black necktie or a white necktie.

In point of fact, New England is New England because some thirty or forty thousand people chose to come here, in the years between 1620 and 1640, with the central view of establishing something like what we call the Congregational Church. These people, when they left home, did not know what they could or what they should do. When the Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth, they had to establish their own government of Church and State; and they did so. They established what they would have called an Independent church; and, if anybody cared for such things now, it would be worth while to say that the word "independent" came into the language through such use in matters of religion and church organization, and that it was not till nearly a century later that its use was transferred to political associations.

The settlers who arrived at Salem with Higginson, under Endicott, in 1628, were of necessity another independent church. They disliked the word "Independent." The Independents of that day were, to people of the Higginson type, somewhat what the people of the Salvation Army are to the worshippers in Grace Church in New York City. But the people at Salem were Christian people and the people at

Plymouth were Christian people; and they found out very early that they could "walk together," even if one set called themselves Independents, and the other did not.

When, two years later, Winthrop and the larger colony arrived, they were most eager to say that they had not separated themselves from the Church of England, that she was still their mother. All the same, they were separated by three thousand miles of water. They had not any intention of paying the slightest obedience to any official called a bishop in England. They had crossed the water precisely because they chose to escape any such control. It became their duty then to establish themselves here on an independent basis, and they did so. But they eschewed the word "Independent" precisely as Higginson and his friends in the Salem colony had done.

Before five years were over, the new churches, not ten in number, thus established by these emigrants, had created a new system of ecclesiastical order. John Cotton appears to have been the person who gave it its name: he called it the "Congregational" system. It has been known as the Congregational system from that time to this.

This system left every separate church in every separate community absolutely free to make its own arrangements for worship and for the other functions for which a church is gathered together. No church is to-day a Congregational church which does not assume this freedom and does not grant it to others.

It is interesting to observe that these Christian men, who established these churches, were so absolutely free to approach God as they chose that they declined the difficult business of defining their faith. John Winthrop and Thomas Dudley could not have agreed on any theological platform any more than John Bright and Pius IX. could have agreed. And, if any effort were made in those years to draw up any statement of Christian doctrine by any one of the ten or twelve churches of Massachusetts, it left no record behind it. Wholly conscious of such independence of opinion in the individual, these separate congregations organized themselves by making "covenants," which are wholly different from creeds. In the language of the First Church of Boston, they "solemnly and religiously promised and bound

themselves to walk in all their ways according to the rule of the gospel, and in all sincere conformity to his holy ordinances, and in mutual love and respect each to other, so near as God shall give us grace." As late as 1650, when the Second Church of Boston was formed, that church formed a covenant, in which they say, "We do avouch the Lord to be our God, and ourselves to be his people, to cleave to him and to one another in him; to cleave to God in Christ as our sovereign good, and to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only mediator and surety of the covenant, as our only high priest and atonement, to satisfy for us and to save us, and as our only prophet to guide and to teach us, and as our only king and lawgiver to reign over us." This covenant of the date of 1650 resembles a creed more than the earlier covenants; but it will be observed that it is simply the covenant of the Second Church of Boston.

If precedent goes for anything, then, if John Cotton and John Wilson and John Winthrop knew what they meant when they talked of a Congregational church, they meant a church which was wholly independent in its relations to other churches, of which the individual members even were wholly independent in their approach to God. They really believed that all their church members were kings and priests. This was no poetical formula to be tucked out of sight whenever it was desirable to have it in the closet. It was the theory of religion in which these men lived and moved and had their being. When, therefore, to-day, any debonair young gentleman, or any old fool of seventy, comes forward to say that, having received a call from a Presbyterian church in Grantville or in Shermantown, where he "can be of more use" than he could be in the Congregational church of which he has been the minister before, he has accepted it, he makes a statement exactly akin to what Colonel Roosevelt would have made if on the first day of July he had announced to some newspaper writer that he had accepted an appointment under the Queen of Spain, and should go over, under a flag of truce, to Santiago, to serve in her army.

I am perfectly well aware that the young gentleman or the old gentleman would both say that, while this is true in historical detail, it is not true in sentiment. They would say

that the Presbyterian Church and the Congregational Church of America are now all one, that they are working for the same purposes and on the same lines. They would say that the mere detail of church government is a matter of entire indifference, as is the detail by which an Episcopal clergyman, if he does not know the history of his church, might call himself a rector, while the clergyman who does know calls himself a minister. But any reflection is enough to show that this is not true. The Presbyterian Church is handled and managed by boards of men, of whom board No. 1 receives the reports from board No. 2; and board No. 2 receives the reports from board No. 3. The real control of its operations is in the hands of elders: these elders are divided into two classes, the clergy and the ruling elders. There is usually but one of the former to each church. Of the latter there are from two to eight or ten or even more. They are usually elected for life, though sometimes for a term of years. That is to say, the Presbyterian Church is administered by an elected aristocracy. And each church in that body is subordinate to the direction of the boards made up from delegates from other churches, and it cannot help itself. It is obliged to submit to their decision.

On the other hand, each true Congregational church chooses its own officers, establishes its own ritual, sends its boys to any college it chooses, and has no power whatever over any other Congregational church.

In the middle of the last century, when Whitefield came round to the New England churches, he was very much disgusted to find that they had no statements of belief. In point of fact, a great many of them had gradually given up the Calvinistic asperities, and were what in language of that time was called Arminian,—"I know salvation's free." This absence of strict Calvinism shocked Whitefield; and he persuaded the Calvinistic ministers, of whom he found some, to make out creeds on the Calvinistic basis, which they persuaded their churches to adopt. But the institution of these creeds did not change the ecclesiastical organization by which the church itself was absolutely free to change its creed, or, if it chose, to forget its creed. Here is the reason why, in any community in Massachusetts, you will find one set of Congregationalists who have not assumed a creed, you

will find another set which have. The First and Second Congregational Churches in Boston have no creed: the Third has a creed, which from time to time it changes, as it has a right to do.

When it came to pass, in the earlier decades of this century, that the New England churches discovered that some of them were bound by Calvinistic creeds and that others were not, it was not unnatural that there should be, as there was, coquetting between the great Presbyterian body, which was absolutely Calvinistic, and those of the New England churches which had maintained some Calvinistic affinities. There were different efforts made to utilize this resemblance of doctrine. Thus the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was a fair and honorable effort to bring all the orthodox churches together into one work. But it was an effort which failed, and that board is now supported wholly by the churches of the Congregational name. They are the orthodox churches of the Congregational name, but all the same it is the Congregational name, and those churches which are under the control of the presbyteries maintain different missions.

Such efforts at uniformity with the other Calvinistic churches of America led to a good many endeavors, the result of which has been that the orthodox churches of the Congregational order are now bound together in a semi-Presbyterianism. That is to say, when a minister is to be ordained in one of them, his doctrine is inquired into, and it has to be approved by the representatives of the different churches which are called together for that purpose. Even this supremacy of a cluster of churches is, however, very slight; for the church which calls the minister has it in its power to choose any churches which it pleases to unite in the council which is to ordain the preacher. If the counsel does not choose to ordain him, the church may begin again and ask another council, and so on till it finds a council amiable enough to accept the young man's heresy. No such system as this is possible under the harder grip of the Presbyterian hierarchy.

The Unitarian churches, on the other hand, are purely independent churches. They come up precisely to the definition given by Cotton and the other early writers of

what Congregationalism really is. It is entirely in the power of any Unitarian church to vote in its annual meeting to adopt the whole Westminster Confession, as its statement of faith. As there is no person in the world who now believes the statement of the Westminster Confession, it is not at all probable that a Unitarian church will do so. But, if it should do so, there is no power existing in the Unitarian body to put that church out of its number or its councils. It is in this that the Unitarian churches differ from the orthodox Congregational churches. If you have a strong man in an orthodox pulpit, a man like Lyman Abbott or Dr. McKenzie or Dr. Gordon or Dr. Herrick in this neighborhood, he says just what he chooses, he is wholly indifferent to the creed of his own particular church or to any platform adopted by the Orthodox consociations. But, if the preacher happens to be a youngster, whose name is not generally known, if he is applying for ordination, and the council which meets does not approve of his views, why, then, all vestige of Congregationalism proper vanishes from the affair; and the power of a body of alien churches is exercised to interfere in the transactions of the congregation which has called him.

No such treatment as this is possible in the Unitarian order.

What do the Evangelical Denominations hold in Common?

BY

Rev. WILLIAM H. LYON, D.D.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
BOSTON

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose."— ARTICLE I. *of the By-laws of the American Unitarian Association.*

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WHAT DO THE EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS HOLD IN COMMON?

BY REV. WILLIAM H. LYON, D.D.

The question "What do the Evangelical denominations hold in common?" is a very difficult one to answer. It would be difficult for them to answer it themselves; it is doubly so for any one not in the close touch with their thought which membership in one of their communions involves.

It is very clear that the whole Evangelical belief is in process of change. It is sliding down like a glacier from the cold and isolated heights of dogma to the warm and fruitful valleys where are the homes and business of living men. The rapidity of the change varies in different denominations and in their different churches or leaders. In the Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Congregational bodies especially, the variety of belief is very great, in many cases greater than the difference between each other. The present controversy over ritualism in the Anglican Church has called fresh attention to the curious fact that there is a wider divergence between the two parties than between the ritualist and the Roman Catholic or between the anti-ritualist and the liberal Christian. Obviously, it is hard to say what several bodies hold in common, when it is hard to find what some of them hold individually. There are also points of doctrine as to which single sects differ from all the rest,—points which their holders consider important enough to justify their separate existence, and even, in some cases, their refusal to co-operate in any religious undertaking whatever. Such, for instance, is the Episcopalian's idea of the Church. This keeps his sect from almost any fellowship with other Evangelical bodies, and prevents his ministers from exchanging or even worshipping with their ministers.

The matter is still farther complicated by the divergence between the original and still plain meaning of some Evangelical creeds and the construction which their adherents put upon them. Striking instances are the assertion of Newman and his fellows in the Tractarian controversy that the Thirty-nine Articles contain the very doctrines which they were framed to deny, and the pathetic failure of the articles of faith of the Andover Seminary to keep out of that institution the liberal tendency which it was established to counteract. There seems to be almost no limit to the power of reverent and loyal progress to read into a creed or a text its own belief. However inseparable from, if not necessary to, intellectual advancement this process may be, it renders an account of the religious beliefs of any age very difficult.

Yet, if we strike an average among the various Evangelical denominations, we may, with tolerable safety, set forth a few points as being commonly held by them.

They believe that the Bible is the ultimate source of knowledge on religious subjects. It contains all the truth that is necessary to salvation. It was given by a process of inspiration which varies essentially from that by which any other range of truth is furnished. The men through whom it was given were selected by divine wisdom for a peculiar task; and the results of their obedience have been gathered into one book, which is unique in literature, supernatural, and to be read with a degree of reverence which can be claimed by no other volume. That it is infallible in every word, few are hardy enough now to claim; but there are those who do claim it, and they seem logically to have the advantage of those who assert both a divine and a human element, but give no criterion by which the two may be discerned. The common view is well stated in the first article of this summary of faith set forth by the Evangelical Alliance in 1846, and adopted by the American Branch in 1867,—"The divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures."

The Evangelical bodies agree also in the doctrine of the Triune God, which involves the Deity of Jesus Christ. Among some of the more liberally inclined may be detected a tendency to substitute the word "Divinity" for "Deity," implying apparently that it is a quality shared by men in

general, or at least by spiritually-minded men. This, however, seems to be exceptional and to be confined to the extreme left wing. On no point are Evangelicals, even of a liberal type, more at one than upon the strict and unique Deity of Jesus Christ, implying thereby a supernatural and altogether exceptional position and quality as distinguished from mankind.

The supernatural quality in the person of Christ is commonly held to pervade his action upon men. Whether influencing man by faith in the atonement or through the sacraments of the Church, there is held to be something exceptional in the communication of divine grace. The religious life is something else than doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. It is a special relation with God, a life outside the common life, possessed of qualities, privileges, and hopes which are not shared by those of different belief or faith. In technical language, those who have attained this peculiar relation to God are "saved." The rest of mankind are "lost."

This brings us to one more point upon which the Evangelical bodies are united,— the condition of the dead. As mankind in this life are divided into the believers and the unbelievers, so hereafter they will be divided between heaven and hell. At death, or, as some hold, at a distant judgment, the race will fall apart into two unchangeable bodies, the one rewarded with eternal happiness, the other punished with eternal misery. There are no gradations in the two fates. No distinctions of character or motive are allowed to influence this absolute division on the ground of faith. The apparent shades of goodness and wickedness which we consider in our moral and even legal judgment have no meaning in the final assize. The supernatural quality found in the Bible, in Christ, and in the religious man, determines, and is the only thing that does determine, the allotment of happiness or misery hereafter. This allotment is unalterable. The dead are "fixed in an eternal state." A respectable minority among Evangelicals will protest against this statement of their position, and it must be admitted that it is falling silently into disuse. Yet it still stands in most of the creeds; and, as in the matter of foreign missions, it is still a motive to action.

The whole Evangelical position, so far as it remains intact and self-consistent, may be stated as reliance upon miracle, while the liberal position is based upon trust in the natural order of the world. What are called miracles in common language — that is, interferences of God in the common order of nature through the action of Biblical personages — are but illustrations of God's habitual method of procedure. The traces of divine power are sought, not in general literature, but in a supernatural book; not in history and in human character as a whole, but in Jesus Christ and in the thin line of the Jewish and Christian dispensations; not in the natural development of character into its due variety and fate, but in the arbitrary separation of souls upon a single issue. It must be repeated that the Evangelical scheme of salvation is crumbling and melting away; but as distinguished from the liberal position, and considered as uninfluenced by the increasingly liberal atmosphere, this is its essence. That God cannot be seen with sufficient clearness to be effective in human history and literature, and in the working of the moral laws in general life, but must be concentrated in unique and supernatural persons, events, and writings to impress the soul, is essentially what Evangelical denominations, as judged by the standards which they still carry, hold in common.

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Rev. HOWARD N. BROWN

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THE UNITARIAN CHURCH:

In its Relations with Other Protestant Churches.

BY REV. HOWARD N. BROWN.

The most obvious thing to say of these relations is that they are, in any particular case, very much what the parties concerned may choose or chance to make of them. Quarrels grow out of the minds of quarrelsome people, and they who want peace can generally get it at no greater expense of patience and perseverance than is required to purchase other of life's blessings. Where the relations between neighboring churches are distinctly hostile or unfriendly, the original fault may lie on either side. Those representing the older faith may combine to crush out what they regard as a dangerous heresy planted in their midst, or the Unitarian Church may consider itself appointed by Heaven to bring home to other organizations the charge of idolatry and superstition. In all such cases, however, it takes at least two to make the quarrel. If other churches go calmly about their business (having legitimate business to do), they are sure to make the attacks of a waspish critic appear ridiculous at last; and the Unitarian Church, which bears with dignity the false accusations urged against it, will win from bigotry itself, in the end, some measure of respect and friendly regard.

In other words there is nothing in the situation we have here to consider which destroys the efficacy of the laws that govern all human intercourse. Difficulties and disagreements exist everywhere; but in ecclesiastical, as in other affairs, peace and co-operation are always within reach when on both sides there is a disposition to seek such relations. Even when that disposition exists on one side only, the church which bears itself like one entitled to respect can almost cer-

tainly compel from others respectful treatment. Still, it would be idle to pretend that Unitarian churches stand on equal footing with others in ability to make terms of fellowship with those about them. On the contrary, a special disability rests upon them, the size and importance of which it is of some consequence to estimate aright, not making too much or too little of this bar to Christian union.

To begin with an exaggeration which seems to be much in the minds of those with whom we could desire to establish a better mutual understanding, it is often charged that Unitarianism set out to destroy Orthodoxy, and is, therefore, by the very nature of its being, a persistent and implacable foe to the prevailing type of Protestant Christianity. They who make this charge are able to quote sayings of Unitarian authorship struck out in the heat of controversy which furnish, to their own minds at least, sufficient evidence of its truth. Perhaps, also, there are Unitarians who hold the same idea of an "irrepressible conflict," and order their behavior toward others on that basis. But this view is nevertheless a gross exaggeration of the truth, and there is no such fatal obstacle to friendly relations between our churches and others as it would imply.

Something, without doubt, Unitarianism set out to destroy, or at all events to war against without ceasing; but that something was not any set of religious opinions. It is rather the use that is made of certain beliefs in the Church and the rank to which they are assigned. Its charge against the Church is not that it believes thus and so, which in its judgment is false and wrong, but that in the name of these beliefs it shuts the door of Christian fellowship in the face of men and women who, by any test of usefulness, intelligence, or character are abundantly entitled to entrance.

Take, for example, what appears to be the fundamental difference in doctrine. Unitarianism is no more committed to warfare against belief in the Trinity than Baptists are committed to disfellowship those who practise baptism by sprinkling, and everybody knows that the controversy over that point long since died out. It is matter of record that the early Unitarians in New England made very little attempt to convert others to their way of thinking, claiming only the right to hold their own opinions on one of the deep prob-

lems of the religious life. Lack of proselyting zeal has always remained one of the characteristic features of the movement. No picture of us is more often held up as an awful example and impressive warning to check tendencies in our direction than that of a people sadly lacking in missionary enterprise. Surely, that ought not to be the habit of mind of an organization which "set out to destroy Orthodoxy." In fact, Unitarianism began as rather a peaceful, contemplative, and scholarly movement. This is what it still is, essentially, to the immense disgust of some of its friends. The notion of it as a vindictive and warlike influence is nothing but a caricature.

We have no interest which should lead us to interfere in the least with those who find comfort or help or strength through their belief in the Trinity. Any pretence on our part that this belief was so false and pernicious, so much a spring of evil in the world as to justify a crusade against it, would be manifestly absurd. If any one wants to engage in friendly debate, we are generally quite ready for the encounter; but we do not regard it as a vital matter that others should believe as we do. Our point is that the beliefs of others are of less consequence than they sometimes suppose, not that they are dreadful wrongs against reason and humanity which we are commissioned to set right.

What is vital in our sight is that the human mind should have liberty to follow after the clearest truth it can perceive. We protest that it is for the Church the worst policy imaginable to cut off from itself all those intellectual forces of the time which have no vital belief in the doctrine of the Trinity. When misrepresentation and abuse are resorted to, to prevent people from thinking along certain lines, we declare that to be prejudicial to the world's best interests. The truth itself cannot afford to win by such tactics. Unitarians, as a rule, betray no consciousness of a mission to instruct mankind at large in all matters of doctrine and practice; but they honestly consider themselves worthy to associate on equal terms with most orthodox Christians of their acquaintance, and, finding themselves regarded as if they were spiritually "unclean," that reveals to them a state of things which it is of some consequence to all concerned to have amended.

The point cannot be too clearly or too strongly stated that the Unitarian attack is primarily delivered, not against doctrines, but against the use made of these doctrines as a test of membership and fellowship in the Church. Salvation by character is one of the chief watchwords of the movement; and this means that all beliefs, orthodox or otherwise, should be held of secondary importance, when weighed against the life.

There is, therefore, no "war to the knife" between the Unitarian Church and other churches, except so far as it is part of the creed of the latter that, no matter what a man is, or what he does, in order to be saved his intellectual nature must be cut to a certain required pattern. Of course, when people believe that others must think exactly their thoughts in order to gain entrance to the kingdom of heaven, it is an offence if they are told that their ideas are not so exactly and eternally true as they suppose. Enlightened Orthodoxy, however, as we understand it, does not take this attitude. That contents itself with declaring that the Trinitarian formula embodies the most reasonable view of the nature of Deity. As to that, we have much to say; but it can all wait while we put this other question,— Is this view so overwhelmingly certain and important that you must needs refuse to recognize those who cannot honestly hold it as being among the followers of Christ? Wherever that question is answered in the affirmative, there is a battle between our churches and others which, beyond all shadow of question, we shall ultimately win. To-day there are many churches nominally orthodox which have outgrown such narrowness of spirit. Between them and us there ought to be, and no doubt will be in time, as much good will as binds together any of the different branches of the Church. At present there is some misunderstanding on both sides. Notably, there is the exaggeration of which we have spoken, that Unitarianism exists only to smite and slay orthodox beliefs. Such foolish ideas will soon disappear from the minds of thinking people, and meanwhile some backward Unitarians will acquire better information in regard to recent changes in the orthodox world.

Unenlightened Orthodoxy (we are sorry to be able to use no other term) is still bound, we suppose, to regard with horror any suggestion that its opinions about Christ come

short of being an exact copy of the Master's mind. Its rooted and fixed disfavor manifested toward us has to be accepted and endured as one accepts a disagreeable east wind. No remedy can be found save through the slow growth and spread of a broader intelligence. This will convince people at last that they have not seen the whole of God's truth, and that, where the fruits of righteousness are displayed, it is well to be sparing in condemnation of the life out of which they spring.

How far it is worth while in face of these difficulties to strive for amicable relations with other churches is a question which involves some consideration of what is at stake. What influence the Unitarian Church has had and may continue to have on other representatives of the Christian faith will be set forth in other articles belonging to this series. Here it must suffice to say that, in so far as we have a message to others, it is of much importance to win from them so much friendly interest that they will listen to what we have to say. It should also be said that for its own sake Unitarianism needs, as much as possible, to get off its "reservation," and find some sympathetic touch with the outside religious world.

We have spoken thus far only of "orthodox" churches as related to ourselves, because that is where the most serious problems lie. It should go without saying that the relations between our churches and liberal movements under other names promise to become better and better year by year. No close organic union of these separate bodies, so far as we can see, is probable or desirable; but they will more and more learn to work side by side with the heartiest good will and mutual esteem.

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Eighth Series] [No. 4

THE UNITARIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THEOLOGY

BY

Rev. SAMUEL M. CROTHERS

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
BOSTON

Our Faith.

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
onward and upward forever.

Typical Covenant of a Unitarian Church.

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THE UNITARIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THEOLOGY.

BY REV. SAMUEL M. CROTHERS.

Modern Unitarianism is continually misapprehended by those from whom intelligent sympathy might be expected. Broad Churchmen, when expounding their own progressive ideas, are usually careful to declare that they are not moving in the direction of the Unitarian heresy. On the other hand, many independent thinkers, when emphasizing their belief in a free religion, find it necessary to declare that they are outside the limits of the Unitarian sect.

It is taken for granted that Unitarianism is coldly intellectual, and that it is altogether critical in its method and controversial in its attitude. Those who have rationalized and spiritualized the doctrine of the Trinity till it would be unrecognized by Athanasius seem to imagine that Unitarians are still threshing over the old straw with Arius and Socinus.

The Unitarianism of to-day must be judged by its living representatives. It does not represent merely the negation of Trinitarianism, any more than Protestantism represents to-day merely the revolt from the papal supremacy. It has become a positive and constructive faith, and as such it must be judged.

The first thing that needs to be said is that *Unitarianism is a protest against the prevailing indifference to theology.* Liberalism within the great orthodox churches is apt to manifest itself in the form of latitudinarianism. A creed is looked upon as "a thing to retain and say nothing about." There is a growing aversion to what is called "doctrinal preaching." It is assumed that the age of theology, like the age of miracles, has passed. One doctrinal statement is as good as another, so long as it is not taken too seriously, but is used only as a vague symbol. It is assumed that it is possible for the Church to retain its hold upon the people,

while it ignores intellectual difficulties, so long as it turns earnestly to all sorts of good work.

Wherever this attitude prevails there is little encouragement for a Unitarian church; for it appeals only to those to whom theology, in its broadest sense, is still a vital interest. The Unitarian declares that it does matter what a person believes, and that the statement of belief should be made as unambiguous as possible. He is of the opinion that most important contributions have, in our own day, been made to theology, that is, to our thought about God and his eternal laws. He believes that a large and true theory is essential to the best practice, and he is not willing to admit that the day for doctrinal preaching has passed away. The real need is for doctrines which are in accord with all the known facts. That clear thinking is not all of religion he readily acknowledges, but that it is a very important part of it he insists. The Unitarian emphasizes intellectual sincerity, and makes it a fundamental part of his religion.

The second characteristic of the Unitarian attitude is that *it treats theology with the same seriousness and respect with which it treats any other department of human thought.* All the serious sciences are experimental in their methods, and demand free and open-eyed investigation. All the pseudo-sciences require of their votaries a blind faith as the condition of their initiation. Shall religion be studied as astronomy and chemistry are studied, or as men in the past learned the mysteries of astrology and alchemy? Shall the preacher stand on the level of the teacher in the school or university, or descend to that of an adept in an art that evades investigation?

The Unitarian insists that his religious teachers must take the higher ground. They must come up to the level of the best intelligence of our day. They must learn the methods by which truth is sifted from falsehood. In the pulpit there must be as much seriousness and patience in the effort to get at ultimate spiritual principles as the chemist exhibits in the laboratory in his qualitative analysis. This is a high standard, and I do not say that many have attained or even approached it; but nothing less than this represents the ideal of such preachers as Channing and Martineau. It is

obvious that a teacher of religion who thus conceives his function will resent any attempt to forestall his conclusions, just as a teacher in any other department resents it. He is an investigator whose chief business is to discover spiritual truth, in order that he may apply it to the development of personal righteousness. The consistent opposition of Unitarians to the imposition of any formal creed rests upon exactly the same grounds upon which a university would oppose any restriction upon freedom of inquiry.

John Milton struck the keynote of liberal religion when he wrote: "The light which we have gained was given us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge. . . . To be still searching what we know not by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it (for all her body is homogeneal and proportional), this is the golden rule in theology as in arithmetic."

Another characteristic of Unitarian thought is that *it marks the meeting place of ethics and theology*. The streams of religious feeling and of ethical endeavor have historically had different sources, and have often flowed along different channels. One comes from the awe and wonder produced by the contemplation of the power or powers above humanity. The other grows out of the experiences of a man among his fellows. Primitive religions had very little connection with moral principles. Pity was something which might exist with very little honesty or kindliness. We see this in the traditions of the Hebrew patriarchs. Jacob was a man of a very inferior ethical development. He was guilty of deceit toward his father, of treachery toward his brother. He was consumed by a passion for "getting on in the world," and was unscrupulous in regard to the means used. But, according to the standards of his day, he was a religious man. He dreamed dreams wherein he saw angels of God ascending and descending, he heard heavenly voices, he was conscious of the presence of an object for worship, he built altars, he made sacrifices, he paid tithes.

Only slowly did the idea grow that true worship must correspond to right conduct, and that religion must be tested by its fruits in the character. The time came when a man who acted as Jacob is reported to have done was no longer

recognized as a truly religious man. It is because religious ideals had been slowly modified and purified by moral progress.

Now just what has been accomplished in the realm of practical religion, the Unitarian declares, must also be accomplished in theology, that is, in the theory and science of religion. Theological doctrines must be subjected to a moral test. Those which contradict the best ethical standards of our time must be rejected. It was just here that Channing took his stand. His "moral argument against Calvinism" was the protest of the outraged conscience against a tyrannous system of theology. God, he argued, cannot be less loving, less just, than the best of his creatures. That cannot be accepted as the will of God which is seen at once to be unworthy when ascribed to man. The Unitarian criticism of doctrines, like that of predestination to eternal misery, vicarious atonement, and imputed righteousness, has usually been that they are unethical. This criticism rests on the assumption that no doctrine can be theologically true and ethically unsound.

The doctrines concerning the nature of Jesus have also been affected by moral considerations. The orthodox believer has often felt that he did the highest honor to Jesus by removing him to a place apart from humanity and above it, by declaring that he is unique and inimitable. To the Unitarian this seems a distinct loss. He insists that the chief significance of the life of Jesus is that its qualities have been continually repeated in the lives of those who have loved him. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself to walk even as he walked."

Unitarianism has no new doctrine concerning God, it lays claim to no new definition; but it lays particular stress upon the moral argument. In the full and free development of that which is highest in human nature, it finds the way of approach to the divine nature. Theology is simplified by this method. An answer comes to the question, What are the things essential, and how may they be distinguished from things unessential? The Unitarian declares that only those things are essential to his theology which are essential to the development of a strong, faithful, hopeful, and helpful life. He is not troubled, then, if his thoughts do not

arrange themselves into a complete metaphysical system. He is content on many interesting points to suspend his judgment. It is sufficient for him to rest in a simple faith in eternal goodness, which may strengthen and sustain him in his own best endeavors. The only faith he greatly values is "a faith that works by love."

So far from being "coldly intellectual," as has been so often asserted, Unitarian theology, on its constructive side, is allied not so much to intellectual as to distinctively spiritual movements. Channing belonged not to the order of logicians, like Aquinas and Calvin, but to the same order of religious teachers as Thomas à Kempis, Tauler, and Fénelon. The kind of theology which interested him was not "systematic theology" in the scholastic sense, but the simple "discourse concerning God" from men to whom God was a reality. It was theology in the sense in which the German mystic of the fourteenth century understood the word when he published his book of devotional thought under the title "Eine Deutsche Theologie." It is noticeable that Unitarian ministers are more apt to quote from the poets who have "listened to the inner flow of things" than from the metaphysicians. They agree with Milton when he said, "Our sage and serious poet Spenser, I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas."

It has not been my purpose to speak of the contents of Unitarian theology. Any one who will take the trouble to read the ample literature that is easily accessible will be convinced that the movement which began with so much spiritual promise has not lost itself in barren speculations nor in dreary negations. At no period of its history has there been more unity of faith in God and righteousness than now. My aim has been to indicate the starting-point and not the goal, the way of approach to the problems of theology.

The Unitarian Church requires of those who would enter its fellowship no assent to any form of doctrinal statement. It does expect of them a certain intellectual and spiritual attitude. It is the attitude of a serious student at the beginning of the study of a great subject which must task all his powers, the attitude of a faithful workman preparing himself for strenuous but inspiring labor. Above all, it is the attitude of a child in his father's house for whom all mysteries, however dark, are interpreted by love.

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Eighth Series] [No. 5

THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF GOD

BY

Rev. MINOT J. SAVAGE, D.D.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
BOSTON

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25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

GEO. H. ELLIS, PRINTER, 272 CONGRESS ST., BOSTON.

UNITARIANISM:

The Modern Conception of God.

BY REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE, D.D.

Were it not for the unfortunate fact that the world has been accustomed to assume the existence of infallible revelations at different stages of its career, we might reasonably look for quiet and natural growth in the sphere of theology, as well as in other departments of human thought and life. But as these infallibilities have been assumed, and as men have been constantly threatened with infinite pains and penalties for disbelieving them, the advances which theology has actually made have been achieved through pain and struggle, and no end of incidental loss.

There is always a serious danger in the overthrow of an established religious belief. This, for the reason that people have been taught and trained to hold that the reality itself was inextricably bound up with, almost identified with, the thought-form, which has merely been its temporary clothing and expression. It is therefore true to-day that, as the result of the working of this principle, thousands of persons are practically "without God and without hope in the world."

The old conception of an *extra-mundane* being, living in a definite place called heaven, arbitrarily ruling the world, as a despot rules his empire,— this thought has hopelessly passed away from the minds of those people who know how, and who dare, to think. And, as they have been taught that this is the God of the Bible, of an infallible revelation, and that, if this be not true, there is no sufficient reason for believing in God at all, it is not, perhaps, so very strange if the teachers have been taken at their word; and many have come to feel that the position of the agnostic is the only rational one.

It is those who are in this state of mind who, whether they are conscious of desiring it or not, really need help. There is no use in trying to help them by assumptions. They are tired of that method. Let us see, then, what we can find by assuming nothing, by starting with universally accepted facts, and taking no single step which these facts do not clearly justify.

When man first wakes up to consciousness of himself as an individual, that consciousness implies the existence of not himself merely, but of a power, being,— no matter what name is used,— which is not himself. In speaking of this other power or being, we will not as yet use the personal pronoun *He*, but rather *It*, so as to avoid assuming anything which, at this stage of our investigation, we do not know. But, as the individual observes and studies, he recognizes the fact that this which is not himself was here before he was born, and will be here after he has passed away. It is the power which is manifested in the universe all about us. We recognize the fact that it is this power which has given us life.

Whether, then, we be theists or agnostics or atheists or materialists, it matters not at present for the purpose of our argument. This power has given us life and is therefore, whatever more it may be, our Father. Out of it have come, not only our bodies, but our minds, our affectional natures, our consciousness, whatever we mean when we think of ourselves as souls. This power has produced not only the beasts of the field, not only the lowest types of humanity, but brains like that of Shakespeare and spiritual natures like that of Jesus.

This being is not merely the sum total of the physical facts and forces which we see and touch. Herbert Spencer has told us that the existence of an invisible and eternal power back of all phenomena, and of which phenomena are only the changing and passing manifestations, is the most certain of all our items of knowledge.

In the next place, we are compelled to think of this power as omnipotent. The manifestations of its might overwhelm us at every turn. To it we can conceive no limits. If we estimate the forces shut up in a drop of water, and then go on to calculate the inconceivable power which holds the

moon in its position as a satellite of the earth, and then try to multiply these by the systems and galaxies which make up what we call the universe, it cannot seem an exaggeration to us to call this power omnipotent.

Not only is this Being omnipotent, it is eternal. We cannot dream of a beginning or an end.

In the next place, we have come to know that this power is one. We have demonstrated beyond all question that we are inhabitants of a *universe.*

Once more, we are compelled to think of this power as intelligent. Whether with our telescopes we invade the heavens around us or with our microscopes peer down into infinite deeps beneath, we find everywhere perfect and universal order. It is an intelligible order; and so we are compelled to think of the power of which it is an expression as an intelligent power.

Now comes the further and far more important question as to whether we are at liberty to think of this Being as personal. This will depend upon what our definition of the word may be. It is not personal in the sense in which we use that word of ourselves, meaning limited, outlined, enclosed in a body; but a little careful thought will reveal the fact that the centre and essence of personality is consciousness, the ability to think or say "I." In this sense, if we may not confidently declare that this power is personal, we are certain of at least one thing. It is, if not personal, inconceivably more than what we are accustomed to cover by that term. Personality is a product of this power; and, since nothing is evolved which was not first involved, and no stream can rise higher than its source, that of which personality is a product must be at least as much as that which is produced.

And here consider a luminous sentence of Herbert Spencer's. This he said to me years ago, and before it was ever published: "There is nothing unreasonable in our supposing that the infinite and eternal power may be as much above and beyond what we mean by the terms 'personality' and 'consciousness' as we are above and beyond vegetable growths." This power, then, is not something less than personality, but perhaps something unspeakably more.

But the one thing on which we must insist almost more than on any other, if we are to believe in God, is that we

may be allowed to think of him as *good*. In the face of the pain and evil of the world, is this possible? Let us think for a moment. The necessary pain of the world — that is, that which we do not needlessly bring upon the lower orders of life and upon each other — may easily be seen to be a sign of beneficence, not of malignancy or even carelessness. If a race of beings were placed in this world, incapable of feeling pain, they could not continue in existence for six months. It is only the sense of pain and the avoidance of those things which cause pain which protect us constantly from imminent destruction. In the next place, we cannot conceive the existence of pleasure without the existence also of pain. It is only through the consciousness of both that we can know the existence of either.

As to moral evil, in the light of evolution, our problem is turned completely around. It is not the origin of evil any longer which we are to explain: it is the origin of goodness. With the coming of man upon the earth, human love and conscience are born; and out of these come growth and the possibility of moral progress. It is beyond the possibility of mere omnipotence to create at once a perfectly virtuous being; for what we mean by virtue is the recognition of its opposite, the struggle against it and the victory over it. The word itself has no significance in any other sense. If there are to be moral beings, then there must be evil and growth through contact with it. The existence of evil, then, is no necessary objection to a perfect trust in the goodness of God.

One other consideration may be briefly touched upon. We know, beyond all question, that the universe is on the side of goodness. In the nature of things it must be in favor of keeping its own laws; and the keeping of its laws is what we mean by right, or righteousness. And then, again, this consideration is further strengthened by the observed fact that the sum of good has been increasing from the dawn of human life on earth. It is the majority power, and is coming more and more into control. This alone is scientific demonstration that the universe is on its side. Were not good in the majority, such a thing as human society could not exist. For what we mean by evil is those tendencies and forces which disintegrate and tear down, while good

is those tendencies and forces which bind together and build up.

The simple fact, then, that human society exists, and is growing at least a little better, century by century, is absolute proof that good is in the majority.

In view of the foregoing considerations, it seems to me that we are now justified in the use of the word God, and in speaking of this God as "He,"— our Father. May we now be permitted to believe that he takes notice of us individually, and that we, small and insignificant as we seem to ourselves, are the objects of his care? To use an illustration, we know that the greatest general is he who not only conceives and carries out his great plans, but he who has the most complete knowledge of those details on which the success of his plans depends. It is said that Napoleon knew more about the details of the different departments of his army than did those subordinate officers who had immediate charge of them.

As we study the microscopic universe, we find that power which swings the planets and suns in their orbits, equally regards the perfect order of the inconceivably small. The only objection that we can frame against God's loving care over the least of us all is our difficulty in grasping such a conception. It is a necessary inference from the thought of the kind of Being which we have been attempting to outline.

May we pray to this Being? We must suppose that between ourselves and him there is much closer affinity than between him and the highest of his creations which do not think or feel. We are souls, children of the infinite Soul; and so between us we may expect there should be the closest and tenderest bonds of sympathy.

We sometimes find it difficult to believe in God, because the thought of such a Being overwhelms us with a sense of mystery. But, if we open our eyes and think a little clearly, we shall find that the mystery is not confined to God. We know that we ourselves exist, and yet each one of us is as unfathomable a mystery as God himself. Let me suggest what I mean by an illustration. I am well aware that the illustration can only hint afar off the greatness of the thought, but it may help us to a more rational conception of that which it is confessedly so difficult to comprehend.

Each one of us, for example, is as profound a mystery as is God; and there are certain parallelisms which are very striking and suggestive. For example, to put it in the most concrete fashion, I am myself as invisible, as intangible, as is God. Throughout the limits of my body I am in a sense omnipresent, as we may think of God as being, as related to the universe. Nobody, not even my most intimate friend, has ever seen me or touched me, or ever will. My body is visible and tangible, but *I* am not my body: I *use* my body. And, when you attempt to locate me, you cannot say that I am in my hand or my foot or my brain. I am all, for any practical purpose, in that part of my body which is in conscious and definite activity at any particular moment. I am in my hand in the warm grasp of friendship, I am in my eye when I look out upon some entrancing scene, I am listening at the gateways of the ear when hearing the voice of a friend, I am at the tip of my tongue, forming the voiceless air into words, when I speak; in short, I am all wherever I am called for by the exigencies of the occasion.

So it seems to me that we may think of God in the infinitesimal world beneath us, in the smallest grass-blade at our feet, in the brain of Shakespeare, the heart of Jesus, in the light of the stars over our heads,— wherever there is life or power or beauty or joy, wherever there is suffering or struggle, defeat or victory, there is God. The old thought of God has absolutely passed away; but God himself, by the great changes in thought and theory which are passing over the world, is only brought unspeakably nearer to us. He is not in heaven only: he is close by our sides. He is nearer than the breath we breathe or the beating of our hearts. As Tennyson phrases it,—

> Speak to Him, thou, for he hears,
> And spirit with spirit may meet.
> Closer is he than breathing,
> And nearer than hands and feet.

Let us not, then, hesitate to accept the light of the new revelation which shines out of God's heaven to-day, but fearlessly follow his leading, knowing that thus we must come ever nearer and nearer to himself.

Eighth Series] [No. 6

Unitarianism as a Social Force

BY

Rev. JULIAN C. JAYNES

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
BOSTON

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The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
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UNITARIANISM AS A SOCIAL FORCE.

BY REV. JULIAN C. JAYNES.

Jesus was not a theologian. He was a great teacher.

He was not the custodian of the keys of heaven. He was a spiritual energy set loose in the world.

He did not try to reform men from the outside. He opened the door, and aroused their sleeping nobilities.

Christianity, as it came from the lips and life of its author, was a message to man as a social being. It said nothing about redemption from a primitive fall. It laid no exceptional stress on citizenship in a remote celestial region. But it called men away from personal sinfulness to practical righteousness, and made them decent, honest, helpful citizens of God's kingdom on earth. Christianity primarily aimed to improve the social life of humanity. It sought to reform the world by reforming institutions, to reform institutions by reforming men, to reform men by lifting their motives and purifying their ideals.

Now Unitarianism claims to be the direct heir of this beneficent impulse of Christianity. It does not, however, arrogate to itself an exclusive interest in the welfare of the social order; but, as a legitimate member of the Christian household, it has adopted for its own those principles which it believes were the essential features of Jesus' teachings. While, therefore, other denominations have emphasized the doctrinal and ecclesiastical elements of Christianity and have developed themselves along those lines, Unitarianism has emphasized the practical and ethical side, and has generated within itself a temper of mind and heart that fits it in a special manner for righting the wrongs of society and quickening the highest qualities of manhood and womanhood. The same social forces that pulsated in the religion of Jesus are alive to-day in Unitarian thought and purpose;

and, what he was trying to do for the people of Palestine, Unitarianism is trying to do for the social organism of the present time.

What are these social forces? In the first place, Unitarianism recognizes the fact that society exists, and that its needs are present needs. This world is not a mere vestibule for heaven, but is heaven in the making. The kingdom of God is not delayed for some millennial dawn, but is here, in this year of grace, amid the rush and roar of human affairs. Here right and justice are to be done. Here men are to be saved. Here the eternal life begins. Here the walls of the New Jerusalem are to be reared.

In this conception of the immediateness of God's kingdom is found a new and greater motive for living the true life and helping others to live it. It defines the field of action, dignifies effort with a world-wide importance, impresses men with the value of their relations with one another, and, delivering them from the fatal self-consciousness of saving their own souls, fixes their attention on the larger business to which God calls them in the affairs of daily life.

Another social force resides in the idea of man's natural dignity and inherent worth. Unitarians have always assumed this. It has been the source of their inspiration and the ground of their endeavor. Man, a child of God,— not figuratively, but actually,— and, as such, possessing indestructible qualities of divinity. He is not fallen, but is risen. Society is not a jumble of human wrecks, but is a living stairway up which goodness is slowly climbing, displacing what is gross and mean. Is the world bad? Is the social life full of evils? Are men brutal and selfish? Then they are to be made better, not by importing some new element from the creative workshop, but by stimulating and training those fundamental qualities which the divine hand has already set in the human heart. Under the guidance of this great truth Unitarianism is working and hoping to-day, confidently making its appeal to the inborn nobility of man, seeing in society the power to save itself, finding in the growing sense of justice and the closer ties of brotherhood the ultimate solution of the world's social problems.

There is also a distinct social influence in the prominence which Unitarianism gives to personal righteousness. Char-

acter is the main thing. Salvation is not an other-world condition. It is health from the tip of the finger to the centre of the soul. When, therefore, every man is morally healthy, society is already saved, and the mechanics of reform are obsolete. Unitarians, therefore, say that character is the sanity of life, and right living the backbone of all social order. And in no Pharisaical spirit they quietly practice what they preach, and stand wherever they are as types of the best and truest citizenship. This in itself is a strong social force operating not only as a unit of activity, but also as a subtle influence, sweetening and vitalizing all it touches.

We see also in the attitude of Unitarianism toward the advance of knowledge another evidence of its practical interest in the social welfare. It regards ignorance as the nursery of half the evils of human thought and deed. Therefore, give men more light, and there will be less stumbling, fewer misunderstandings, better ideas of what constitutes civilized life. And so, whenever science has broken the seals of mystery, Unitarianism has stood by and welcomed the revelation. It has thus been foremost and virtually alone in giving religious sanction to the march of knowledge and in showing to the doubting multitude that the vital truths of Christianity can occupy the same room with the vital truths of modern discovery.

Unitarianism is furthermore exerting an important influence in its adoption of perfect freedom in matters of religious opinion. The individual conscience is deemed too sacred to be tampered with, and private judgment is conceded to be the inalienable right of every man and woman. That means the abolition of dogmatic authority, the destruction of sectarian intolerance, and the carrying over of the spirit of democracy into morals and religion,— every man his own priest, bishop, and king, every man answerable to his own reason for his convictions, every man unhampered in the evolution of his life by either creedal tests or ecclesiastical shibboleths. In this principle is embodied a social force of vast reach and power. For, if society is ever to become what we dream, that ideal will be attained not by means of any arbitrary authority from without, but by the exercise of an authority from within, — an authority based on the individual's consciousness of his responsible self and his freedom to act. Behind the true

citizen always must be the true man. And the true man can be developed only under conditions where he has the widest liberty to grow on the higher, nobler sides of his nature.

Unitarianism is proving itself a social force in one other way. It is in the philanthropic service of its disciples. However indifferent they may be to their own denominational interests, they are not indifferent to calls for practical helpfulness among men. What concerns society concerns them. It is all God's business and therefore their business. And so, ignoring all sectarian barriers and caste distinctions, they are ever ready with hand and purse to serve their fellow-men. Men are human beings first, and church members afterward. Give them room, light, air, intelligence, justice. Solve their problems, remove their disabilities, improve their conditions. That is why Unitarians stand in the front rank of those who are endeavoring to secure for men the widest culture, the last truth, the sanest philanthropy, and complete justice. And it can be said, without boasting, that certainly in New England, where Unitarianism is most strongly intrenched, if the roll of helpers and lovers of humanity were called, it would be found that a large proportion of our thinkers, educators, philanthropists, reformers, statesmen, broad-minded, public-spirited citizens, were nurtured in the Unitarian household and kindled their torches at the beacon fires of liberal thought.

Unitarianism as a social force! What, then, does it mean? Simply this: a thought, a spirit, a life, that is constantly issuing from it to modify and enrich the thought, spirit, life, of the social world of to-day. This influence eludes all statistical forms, and yet it is vastly greater than the present numerical strength of the Unitarian body would indicate. It pervades all the best enterprises for humanity, and is easily recognized in whatever theological livery it wears. And, if a word of prophecy were permissible, it would be safe to predict that the social forces of liberal thought to-day will be the dominant and duly acknowledged forces in the next century.

It is for Unitarianism, then, to cherish this peculiar privilege, and to go on building up a spiritual estate which will make the world rich. While others are devising new schemes of salvation or mending the old ones, let the liberal church

be content to create that subtle moral energy that outlives all schemes, and saves mankind at last. And, though its denominational name should pass away, the social forces which it has generated will still move on under the banner of Christianity, beneath whose ample folds all names are foolishness, and all sectional lines worthless and absurd.

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FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath to the American Unitarian Association, a corporation established by law in the State of Massachusetts, the sum of.....dollars.

Eighth Series] [No. 7

The Unitarian Church:

Its Working Forces

BY

Rev. FREDERICK B. MOTT

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
BOSTON

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The motive power of any system of faith depends essentially upon its capacity to open to the individual soul sources of spiritual communication with God. In this adaptability to the highest spiritual service of the individual, Unitarianism is peculiarly qualified. Sweeping away the confusion of creeds, restoring faith in the unbroken unity of the universe, revealing Jesus as the realization of God's life in man, uniting all humanity in a spiritual kinship with the divine, the gospel of the Unitarian Church holds, potentially, a mighty means of leading the accepting heart to the fountains of all life.

But, however true, pure, and refreshing the spirit of a faith may be, there must, for its extension, be marshalled about the spiritual power a body of disciplined working forces. Especially is this true where, in order to have a chance of acceptance, the new faith must force its way through the magnificently perfected organization of an older faith.

This is just what Unitarianism has to do.

The systematized methods of promulgating Orthodoxy have, during several generations, successfully permeated the popular mind with the underlying doctrines which form the foundation of the old faith, and which constitute the most serious barrier to the admission of the fundamental conceptions of Unitarianism.

The method of appeal to isolated Scripture texts as establishing eternal truth, the deeply planted conviction that for personal safety the individual must seek outside the realm of reason and natural law, the removal in the popular mind of Jesus Christ from the plane of our own humanity,

the element of fear as to the future, the steady insistence upon the inherent sinfulness of human beings,— these and other allied beliefs operate most powerfully against the admission of the first principles of a faith which rests upon the natural indwelling of the divine spirit in all human life, and interprets all phenomena thereby. Just as mediæval Catholicism confronted the new thought of Protestantism, so Orthodoxy confronts and opposes the passage into modern life of Unitarianism. And, as Protestantism could not have established itself, as a theory or a spiritual influence such as it appeared in the mind of Erasmus, without the practical rallying along definite lines and the skilful ordering into methodical forces which it received from Luther and Calvin, so essential is the need to-day for the gathering together, with united front and definite activity in compact forces, of all who would see the liberating gospel of the Unitarian Church really reaching the minds and hearts of the people.

At the present moment this is by far the most important matter pressing for the active response of every earnest Unitarian.

Our theology and faith have developed far enough to be thoroughly differentiated from the older faith. The progress of scientific instruction in popular education, and the general acceptance of the evolutionary theory as a method of growth in other fields of human research, have prepared the way for a more favorable hearing than has ever before been possible. Yet hardly any valuable advance can be made for lack of power in the working forces.

Let us glance over the front presented by the Unitarian Church to the world, and consider the opportunities for increasing its efficiency.

(1) *The Individual.*— The Unitarian layman, speaking generally, most frequently appears as a man of more than average ability, influence, and wealth. In character and life he nobly expresses the faith that is in his heart. But what is his relative value as a working force for his Church? Is it not distinctly less than that of the layman in other denominations? He is a splendid giver to all good causes, except the best — the cause of the highest spiritual education. He is an eloquent advocate of every movement of reform, except the most essential one, the movement toward a deeper, wider,

grander, religious life. The one thing he is shy of helping liberally is his own Church. The one great topic for which his voice is most rarely lifted in energetic appeal is the Unitarian faith. Here, then, in the individual, the unit of our working forces, there is a grand opportunity for creating power and a voice, that the joyous revelation made to us may be brought to the hearts and homes of the people. We have exactly the material in our influential, educated, wealthy laity to form a simply irresistible force, by which the Unitarian faith might be lifted to the place that is waiting for it, just as soon as giving can be concentrated upon our own working forces, and voices raised for our Unitarian gospel.

(2) *The Church.*— Each local church is not only an organization of individuals, but a station for the promotion of the cause in its particular community and a link in the effective power of the denomination. We have nearly four hundred and fifty such stations of more or less well-established permanency. Over two hundred are in New England, the rest scattered from a cluster in New York State through all the Middle and Western States to the Pacific coast, with two or three self-supporting societies in the South. This is not much numerically, compared with population and enormous extent of territory; but it may be a very effective working force if inspired by that loyalty which the smallness of numbers renders particularly necessary. Above its own needs every church, however small or lonely, should feel itself bound to do something practical for the advance of the Unitarian gospel immediately in its own front.

The moment this feeling possesses a church, and it realizes that it is not a mutual benefit club, but an arm of a compact organization fighting for room in the world for a great cause, then many pressing practical questions are at once solved for it. Why should it exert itself to appeal to the unchurched public by making the services really attractive rather than simply conforming to a cold tradition? Why should it establish a mission Sunday-school, or support those expensive vespers? Why have its name, and a hearty invitation to visitors, prominently placed at its entrance gates? These questions and a host of similar ones answer themselves in the recognition of a cause beyond self-satisfaction. When each church feels that its life is in its contribution to the life

of others, that as it gives it lives, then it takes its place as a strong factor in the working forces of the denomination, being assured that every dollar it can contribute to the national missionary fund is a partial fulfilment of the purpose of its being.

(3) *The Conference.*— The single church, wherever situated, ought to gain a sense of its union with others through some local conference. Besides the National Conference, which is advisory, not executive, we have nine District Conferences, covering areas like the Missouri valley, the Pacific coast, etc., nine State conferences, and eleven local New England conferences. The influence in most of these conferences has, however, not been very strong in the direction of creating the sense of centralized cause for which all were parts of the working force. They have been largely conferences for comparison of progressive *thought.* While this is important, the conference for purposes of comparing aggressive *work* would be most helpful in strengthening the line of forward movement. Practical effort might be cultivated by having announcements made at each local conference of the work done by each church in its local field, for the common cause, especially its contribution to the American Unitarian Association, its circulation of literature or its publication of sermons, etc., its services of minister in missionary preaching. Besides this encouragement of its churches, each conference might well initiate work in which all could participate in local missionary movements. But to bring the individual churches to a realizing sense of their essential value as stations in the whole line of common activity, to make each feel its needful place in the working force of the denomination,— this is as important as for the colonel of a regiment to make his company officers understand that their companies are working parts of an army.

(4) *Other Organizations.*— The survey of the line of working forces cannot omit the many effective branches wielding various powers and exerting a wide influence in many fields. Yet it will be possible here only to indicate a few of such auxiliary means by name. The Ministerial Associations have their own legitimate sphere. The Boston Association has had an uninterrupted existence since prior to 1686. The Unitarian clubs of laymen are a recent but most valuable addi-

tion to practical denominational interests. The Channing Club of Chicago was the first to be formed, in 1881. Since then eight other similar clubs have been founded. The Boston club has attained great celebrity through its munificent contributions toward denominational enterprises.

The Women's Alliance, of which a local branch may be found in almost every church, is an outgrowth of the Women's Auxiliary Conferences. The new constitution was adopted in 1890, since when a very vigorous policy of practical service to the denomination in arousing the effective interest of the women has been in force, and has accomplished striking results in innumerable cases, greatly adding to the efficiency of many outlying churches, and distinctly increasing the sense of a closer fellowship throughout the denomination.

The Young People's Religious Union has only been in operation since 1896, yet it is already showing its efficiency in drawing the younger elements of our churches into closer relations.

Marked progress is being made in Sunday-school methods by the energetic work of the Unitarian Sunday School Society and by the Western Sunday School Society.

(5) *The American Unitarian Association.*— All intermediate organizations find their power centralized in the national representative executive body known as the American Unitarian Association. Established in 1825, every decade has demonstrated the wisdom of gathering all interests about this central organization. With a thoroughly representative board of twenty-eight directors (ministers, laymen, and women), meeting every month, hearing appeals, directing movements, and coming into sympathetic touch with every district and each distant church, the American Unitarian Association, from its headquarters on Beacon Hill, Boston, has the opportunity of initiating, guiding, and inspiring in the most systematic and effective way the whole line of working forces. Careful remodelling of its methods and business system, as the result of long experience, has brought the management to a high degree of practical efficiency. The income from invested funds meets all the running expenses of administration, so that the yearly contributions from churches and individuals are all applied directly to missionary work in

supporting and promoting the common cause. While the actual work of this Association can be shown under a few headings,— such, for instance, as publication, the issuing of a constant stream of timely tracts and the free circulation of the same, the free distribution of copies of Channing's sermons, etc.; book-room, for the collection and sale of all literature bearing upon liberal religious inquiry; missions, New England, Middle, Southern, Western, Pacific, and foreign, the support of ministers, the aiding of needy churches, the establishment of new movements; education, the assistance of divinity students,— yet such a summary gives no sort of adequate idea of all the innumerable opportunities for co-operation, for helpful advice, for wise sympathy, encouragement, and the strengthening hand of fellowship, which are made possible by the existence of the American Unitarian Association. As a matter of fact, fully half of our churches owe their existence to its fostering care.

The palpable result of this survey of the working forces of the Unitarian Church is clearly that within its restricted limits there has naturally developed the essential line of organized effort for the forcible advancement of the new faith. Like a plan for the irrigation of a country, the channels are cut, the stations built, machinery in place, but, after all, only a trickle of the full stream of life-giving water flows through. We must look back to the individual,— not his own soul's satisfaction only, but the compulsion of the Holy Spirit on his heart to aid in the national fight for religious freedom, in the work of the whole denomination toward carrying the divine gospel, given to it as a sacred trust, to the brotherhood of man. As Unitarians feel this individual compulsion, the source of power will increase and the meadows of the promised land will become productive in response to the flowing streams of contributions filling full the channels of our working forces.

UNITARIANISM AND MODERN DISCOVERY

BY

Rev. JOHN W CHADWICK

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
BOSTON

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UNITARIANISM AS AFFECTED BY MODERN SCIENCE AND DISCOVERY.

BY REV. JOHN W. CHADWICK.

I have often said that there is no such Unitarian as Modern Science; and the statement is no rhetorical exaggeration, but is clearly within the lines of sober truth. For there is no word which resumes so much of modern science and discovery as Unity. All the great chapters of modern science are chapters of a possible book of which the title should be "The Unities of the Natural World." Profound thinkers have doubted whether the Conservation of Energy is not a greater discovery than Darwin's Origin of Species by Natural Selection. And what a Unitarian discovery it is! — resolving, as it does, all forces into so many modes of motion, showing how each is capable of transformation into this or that other, and suggesting that all natural forces are but different manifestations of one great central force which keeps the universe in time and tune. What a Unitarian discovery is that of the Solar Spectrum, with its revelations of the identity of the substance of our planet with that of the sun and the more distant stars! How Unitarian those discoveries of the geologist which ally the processes now going on to those which have made the general configuration of the earth's surface what it is, the roadside stream and pool showing us how the great alluvial deposits have been made and the earth's surface variously embossed and graven! How Unitarian was Agassiz when he found everywhere in the progressive steps of nature ideal anticipations of the next succeeding! But how much more Unitarian was Darwin when he contended that these ideal anticipations were actual and genetic, and found one process sweeping through all genera and species, and all of these but differentiations of a common stock! Now all these unities

of static nature carry with them irresistibly the unity of that dynamic nature which is but another name for God.

Next to the unity of God, the dignity of human nature is the most characteristic doctrine of our Unitarian body of belief. Indeed, Channing called this his "one sublime idea"; and it was certainly much more to him than the numerical unity of God. It was the unity of God with Himself, his moral unity, the at-one-ment of his justice and his mercy, that was the unity for which Channing greatly cared. And this moral unity of God was an inference from the dignity of human nature. Could mortal man be more just than God, more kind, more merciful? Now it would seem as if the dignity of human nature was a doctrine that would suffer more than any other that we cherish from the later developments of science, especially from the doctrine of man's derivation from the lower animals. Good orthodox people who had never had a very lively sense of the dignity of human nature were greatly troubled by this impugnment of it, and so at first were certain Unitarians. And no wonder, when there was Agassiz insisting passionately, "We are not the children of monkeys: we are the children of God." But before long a better sense prevailed. The long way humanity had come hinted the longer way it has to go toward its perfection. The divine patience in creating man, not by a sudden word, but by a process thousands of centuries long, was seen to be significant of his worth.

"'Tis not what man does that exalts him, but what man would do."

Still less is it what man has been that degrades him: it is his failure to be what now he might be if he would.

But with the conviction of man's animal origin there has come into our Unitarian thought a conviction of his animal inheritance. The individual mind is less a *tabula rasa* for us than it was for our fathers. It is a palimpsest to which many generations have contributed the various lines. Where the Calvinists found original sin and total depravity, we find ancestral taint and the pressure of a base environment; and so, more frequently, our blame for human weakness turns to pity on our lips and in our hearts.

The science of criticism, with its discovery of the true character of the Bible, has brought immense and powerful

confirmation to our later modes of Unitarian thought. Our Unitarian scholars are to-day in substantial agreement with the scholars of all other religious bodies, the Roman Catholic included, as to the character of the Biblical writings, their date and authorship, and the mechanical juxtaposition of their parts. The inferences drawn from these critical results, however, vary considerably. The more orthodox still endeavor to make out that there is in the Bible "a kind of a sort of a something" that entitles it to be called a supernatural book; but even here the word "supernatural" is eviscerated wholly of its traditional contents. It is evident that a book of this character can furnish no arbitrary authority for any system of belief. The foundation of Scripture once claimed for dogmatic Christianity perishes utterly. If the traditional system of doctrine is to survive, it must survive because of its intrinsic rationality. Nothing can be more absurd than the insistence that the critical transformation of the Bible does not affect its theological contents. It may be better than ever, but it cannot be the same. A great philologist, George P. Marsh, declared that to retranslate the Bible would be fatal to the traditional theology. But its critical disintegration and rearrangement is to a new translation, though it were such as Bottom's in Shakspere's fantasy, as ten, or ten times ten, to one, as affecting its theological contents and implications. Meantime, the Roman Catholics are happy. "Let the gall'd jade wince," they say: "our withers are unwrung." Their dependence is not on Scripture, but on tradition. But the tradition is as subject to criticism as the Scripture, and the outcome of the criticism does not leave one stone of the Roman Catholic's traditional pretensions on another.

The Bible of scientific criticism is not the Bible of our Unitarian fathers. That was as supernatural as the Bible of their orthodox contemporaries, until in their passionate eagerness to discover *what it taught* they got first an inkling and then a clear understanding of *what it was*. Simultaneously, our conception of Jesus has become more and more humanitarian. Not only have many of the orthodox proof-texts disappeared: those that remain are seen to prove what certain known or unknown persons thought about the nature of Jesus, proving nothing as to what that nature actually was.

Another science, that of Comparative Religion, has done much to abash the pretensions of Christianity to a unique character and to widen our religious sympathies with sheep of other folds.

In general, the development of natural science has so tended to enlarge the universe for a devout imagination that such a scheme of religion as that heretofore exploited by our orthodox friends is frankly impossible. It is utterly incongruous with the vastness and the splendor of the universe as science has revealed it to the scientific mind. As a house of cards compared with Salisbury or Amiens is the traditional theology compared with the universe of science. And Unitarianism, too, has been compelled to find a "larger thought of God," commensurate with its thought of the eternities and immensities as they have been brought home to its imagination by the disclosures of the astronomer and geologist, the biologist and anthropologist.

However it was with us in the earlier course of our development, we have had of late a very real advantage over the most of those who keep up a semi-detached connection with the conservative churches, in that our intellectual integrity and self-respect are not subjected to the constant strain of the endeavor to somehow square our actual belief with the standards of Orthodoxy expressed in this, that, or the other creed or catechism or confession. But closely allied with this advantage there is another which is much greater. It is that we can freely realize our Unitarian doctrines and ideas, that we cannot realize them too efficiently for our satisfaction and delight. We have not the least temptation to minimize these doctrines and ideas. We believe, and therefore speak, without equivocation; and to have a body of belief that we can so realize and so maximize is an advantage which we would not overvalue if we could, and could not if we would.

It goes without saying that much of the new truth of science is now widely accepted in the most orthodox circles. But it is generally accepted there as something that *must* be accepted, not as something that should be accepted joyfully. It is accepted apologetically. It is a simple fact that, in general, the whole body of recent science has had for us a genial and inviting aspect, while it has had for our orthodox friends a forbidding and repellent one. But it is undeniable

that the most recent science has opened many new problems, and that some of them may well breed in us an anxious heart. Our world is not such a nice, little, comfortable world as that of our Unitarian fathers. It is much more grand than that, much more mysterious, much more awful in its heights and depths, its glories and its glooms. But the more we search, the more we wonder, and the more we trust that, if we could see deep enough, we should "see musically," as Carlyle believed, and hear an all-including harmony of law and love.

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CHARACTER-BUILDING.

BY REV. CHARLES G. AMES, D.D.

Whatever other phases the Unitarian movement may have presented, it has certainly been a call to the life of righteousness. Whether as result or as concomitant, there has been an emphatic assertion of the dignity and divine possibilities of humanity as heir to the image of God and called to share his perfection. It has proclaimed that virtue is natural, that sin is unnatural. It has appealed to the gospel as a higher and clearer interpretation of the proper laws of life, illustrated by one who, whatever his rank or mission, is pre-eminent among many brethren.

The key-note of this gospel of character-building was firmly struck by William Ellery Channing. Profoundly impressed by the spirit and teaching of Jesus, he joyfully saw that "all minds are of one family," with one Father; that the aim of Christianity is moral perfection, acquired through rational enlightenment and personal freedom; that "consciousness and rationality are the marks of a being who is to govern himself"; that man's moral nature is a divine oracle; that salvation from sin and evil is wrought out, not by the confirmation of selfish hopes and fears, but by the quickening of nobler sentiments and higher aspirations; that the vision of truth and goodness is the vision of God,— a vision which becomes possible and clear only as the spirit of man is cleansed of grossness and fitted by purity and intelligence to hold in its own transparency the divine image; that progress or improvement must consist in copying into personal character the qualities which we revere and adore, as they are manifest in reason, conscience, and affection; and that men ought to live together in earthly societies on heavenly principles.

There are many thoughtful persons in all the churches to

whom these views are welcome; but they are obscured, and even contradicted, by the emphasis given to so-called schemes of salvation. When we deal in those spiritual goods which are among the products and assets of all systems of religious culture, we have no use for a denominational trade-mark. To talk of Unitarian virtue or Unitarian ethics would be as absurdly arrogant as to claim a monopoly of the multiplication table, or of geology, or of the sunrise. There is no patent process for the manufacture of character, no theological combine or churchly syndicate that can claim an exclusive agency for the Holy Ghost. Yet it seems possible that the Unitarian movement, whatever its limitations and defects, is an appointed witness to certain spiritual verities which Christendom has disparaged or neglected.

Character is built, or grows, from within outward. We may distinguish conduct from motive, as we distinguish the human from the divine; but we cannot separate them. A right life is all of one texture: it is the same at the surface as at the centre. Goodness is the fruit of the spirit: so perhaps is an apple or a corn of wheat. But man lives and acts in conscious freedom. The moral alternative — the choice between good and evil — is ever before him, like a parting of the ways. Right character is simply the result of a habitual choice of the perceived *best.*

Unitarianism has thus become a protest against all fatalistic or non-moral theories of philosophy or science, all antinomian or anarchic laxities, all schemes of salvation by miracle, magic, sacrament, soundness of doctrine, churchly charter, or priestly hocus-pocus. In the face of traditional notions of imputed righteousness which falsify the celestial book-keeping, and in the face of judicial pardons which leave the sinner in his sins, it steadfastly proclaims a moral order in which every man passes for what he is, and must be dealt with according to his works. The enlightenment of the mind by truth, the refinement of the affections by love, the rectification of the will by obedience,— transformation and deliverance from evil through inward renewal,— these it holds to be essential to the good life, like the *inward* operations of light, heat, and air to the vitality and health of the body.

Its ideas and methods fall into a line with the doctrine

of evolution, the intimations of advancing psychology, the theories of enlightened educators, and the principles of free society. It appeals to primary instincts, and builds on the constitution of man, or the foundation laid in his unperverted nature.

But the individual life is planted in the collective life. It is an anæmic philosophy and a shallow conceit which takes no account of historic forces, which ignores the educative, restraining, and inspiring power of institutions, or despises the world's great traditions. Unitarians acknowledge their debt to the past; yet they do not hesitate to use the winnowing-fan of free criticism to separate the wheat from the chaff. They find building material for character in the wisdom of the wise, the heroism of the brave, the inspiration of prophets, the chrism of Messiahs. From the treasure of things new and old, they would help themselves to whatsoever things are profitable, true, just, pure, and lovely. And, since "three-fourths of life is conduct," they hold that every tree is to be judged by its fruits, and that character is built up, not alone by correct thinking or by noble emotions, but "by patient continuance in well-doing."

Entirely in harmony with these conceptions is what Plato teaches of "mind as cause"; what Swedenborg affirms of rationality and freedom as the bases of responsibility; what Froebel says of "free self activity" as the end of education and the vital principle of personality; what Herbert Spencer urges concerning the importance of self-development and of helping the pupil to become his own teacher; what Emerson means by bidding each man ask himself, "Am I not also real?" The germ of this divine philosophy of humanity appears in the immense significance given in Gospels and Epistles to the great word "life."

How do Unitarians deal with the grave and perplexing problem of sin? Precisely as the old prophets and the Jesus of the first three Gospels seem to have dealt with it. If the Father's child has wandered, an unbought welcome waits his return. If the moral constitution of man has been impaired or disordered by evils, hereditary or acquired, restoration must be sought just where the wise physician looks for the cure of bodily disease; namely, in the quickened activity of vital forces, — a quickening which reaches and

saves the sinning soul through the searching power of truth and love; that is, through faith in something better. Unless creation is vastly worse than a failure, sin, sad and woful as it is, awful as it may become, is never the main fact of man's being. The gospel makes it something to be left behind and forgotten.

This body of believers is bound by no doctrinal standards, and they have no authorized spokesman; yet, I believe, there are few among them who would not assent to this general statement: —

A miniature image of the Parent Spirit is the ground-plan of man's being. Right character is the moral structure built upon that foundation, producing that image in a sound personality. This result follows, sought or unsought, whenever the spiritual or rational principles of the man's nature are fed and fostered by holy influences and wise instructions, whenever the man "walks in the light."

Divine qualities are developed to athletic vigor in human character by habitual exercises of duty and devotion, or by honestly following that which is seen to be good. As the man increasingly realizes his relations to nature and humanity, he discovers that his opportunities, exposures, and experiences may all be utilized for worthy ends in his own life and the life of others. It becomes easier to believe that his earthly lot is appointed by a Wise Goodness, which he is born to share. He grows toward the perfection of the Father just so fast and so far as he is faithful as a son to the law disclosed to his mind or written in his heart.

THEODORE PARKER. A Biography

By Rev. Octavius B. Frothingham

Size, 5 3-4 x 7 3-4; pages, 588; price, $1.00 *net*; postage, 14 cents.

THE author's single aim has been to present the person of Theodore Parker with all simplicity. Some details which have been given at greater length in Weiss's biography have been omitted, and to this latter the critical student is referred. It has seemed that the biography of Weiss, issued in two large volumes, was too heavy for general circulation, and too expensive for general purchase. The present biographer, in addition to the materials that were placed in the hands of Mr. Weiss, has been intrusted with many private letters and personal reminiscences, which enable him to fill out his picture with delicate touches. "From old sources and new the qualities of the man have been drawn in such a way that the records, literary and historical, may reveal, and not cloak, his form." This method of treatment has resulted in the drawing of a faithful and adequate portrait.

PRAYERS

By Theodore Parker. With a Preface by Louisa M. Alcott, and a Memoir by F. B. Sanborn

Size, 4 3-4 x 7; pages, 218; price, 75 cents *net*; postage, 7 cents.

"IT is in the very spirit of devotion, the gentle or the martial, that these prayers were conceived and uttered. Like so many of his predecessors in the New England pulpit, Theodore Parker was 'mighty in prayer.' It was the natural language of his soul." — *Mr. Sanborn, in his* MEMOIR.

"Parker's prayers were one of the strongest attractions of his church, and did much to win and soften souls, after his unsparing hand had torn away the veil behind which so many hide even from themselves. Like spring rains on newly plowed fields, came mercy after justice. . . . Perhaps the secret of the worth and beauty of these prayers lies in the fact that his life illustrated them so truly that those who knew him felt he had a right to pray." — *Miss Alcott, in the* PREFACE.

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25 Beacon Street, Boston

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Eighth Series] [No. 10

UNITARIANISM:
RELIGION WITH LIBERTY

BY

Rev. GEORGE BATCHELOR

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
BOSTON

Our Faith.

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
onward and upward forever.

Typical Covenant of a Unitarian Church.

In the love of the truth, and the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man.

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BY REV. GEORGE BATCHELOR.

To develop in man the religious sentiment; to discover the principles of righteousness; to learn all the truth that is within the reach of the human mind; to apply these things in the life of men and women, and to train them to obedience under the law of liberty,— are distinctive aims of the Unitarian Church.

We find liberty in the world in at least three distinct phases of progress. 1. It begins as an aspiration in the heart of a slave. 2. It becomes an achievement in the life of a freed man. 3. At last it is the condition in which a free man comes to the full and joyous use of all his faculties. As Unitarians, we have distinctly passed the two earlier stages. We are at liberty, and find ourselves in the company of many others within and without the historic churches of Christendom who have also escaped from bondage. We come now to the duty and privilege of developing and establishing the forms of religion which flourish only under the law of liberty.

In the early stages of the religious life of men and nations, when they begin to think about themselves and reason about themselves, they discover that they are in bondage. The family, the tribe, the creed, the church, the state, have already set limits to the thought of man. This comes about naturally through the effort of men to establish and to keep whatever they find to be good. By experience they have learned that some things tend to make men wise and good and happy. As a condition of social stability and progress, they at once try to fix these things in the minds and habits of men,— in poems, in songs, in stories, in creeds, in rites, in ceremonies, in habits of the daily life. They try to keep in mind and to work into practice that which seems to be

good or wise or true. But the time surely comes when further experience teaches that there are better things to be had. A few learn that there is a chance to become still more wise and good and happy. But that which is already fixed must be disturbed if progress is made. Two classes resent and oppose a change,— the one because it believes any change will be injurious, and the other because by keeping things as they are they have power which they would lose. The majority of human beings have always submitted and still submit to this external control, commonly without questioning the right of others to exercise authority over them. Many, however, who are still in bondage begin to cherish a hope of freedom.

A large part of the civilized world has passed out of this condition into the second stage. They have rebelled against external authority in matters of religious faith and practice. They are emancipated. They have become freed men. They rejoice greatly in their freedom. The measure of their joy is the constraint and suffering from which they have been set free. They often, like freed men of all kinds, think that they have won more than they really have. For, as between slavery and freedom, slavery is positive, while freedom is negative. Slavery means external compulsion and constraint. Freedom means the absence of compulsion and restraint; that is, nothing. Put in concrete form, for a slave freedom means no fetters, no manacles, no submission to the will of another. After this fashion one may, in religion, be free, and be neither wise nor strong nor good. One of the weakest and most helpless of all human creatures is often a newly emancipated slave. In many respects he is more helpless than a child. For, while the child has powers which are daily unfolding, the slave has only the powers of a child which in him have been stunted. The freed man is often a moral and intellectual cripple. At the best he is weak, untried, untaught, and has the uses of his powers yet to learn. It takes time to discover that freedom is not a force, but a condition.

In the third stage of progress men become aware of nobler privileges and duties that are to reward their efforts. They are no longer slaves. They are no longer freed men. They are free men unconscious of a previous condition of

servitude, and unaware of the restraints against which they fretted and rebelled. They are filled with a nobler joy than any freed man can know because he has escaped from a task-master and a tyrant. The Unitarian Church in America began to be only when the third stage of progress had been reached. To Channing, and to the noble men and women who grouped themselves about his teaching and influence, there came a great awakening of religious hope and zeal. They said to themselves and to one another: Now we are free to search for the truth. We are free to live our own lives in accordance with our reason and our conscience. For our own good and the good of others, let us consecrate ourselves to religion under the law of liberty. The aspirations of many had taken form in the Declaration of Independence and in the assertion of human rights. Now the nobler task was to make religion pure and perfect in all its parts. It was not the fault of these men and women that they could not give themselves wholly to the beautiful task which inspired them. At the second meeting of the Unitarian Association, more than seventy years ago, Channing uttered words which still burn, although they come to us in the brief terms of a reporter's abstract. He called upon all loyal men and women to rally with him about the standard of liberty in opposition to measures which were then on foot, not only in society and in the churches, but in the legislature of Massachusetts itself, to limit religious liberty and abolish toleration. Such external conditions no longer exist; but sympathy with others who are still in bonds, whether of creed, of ritual, or of social restraint, distracts the attention of free men too much from their own important task, which begins only when emancipation is an accomplished fact.

If in the place of religion we put any other suitable word,—for instance, the word "civilization," the meaning of these distinctions may stand out more clearly. For example, we have had in America African slavery in civilization. We know its nature and its fruits. We have passed to the second stage. We have established freedom or emancipation in civilization. It has taken us a generation to learn that freedom is merely a condition, and that out of it good does not necessarily come. The mind of a man is like a garden which has brought forth flowers and fruits under cultivation.

Left free, the garden may no longer produce flowers and fruits, but useless weeds and even noxious nettles and poisonous plants. The mind of man is like a garden, excepting the one important difference. The mind of man set free may itself begin a course of cultivation which shall cause it to produce all good things abundantly. We are now watching ten millions of our countrymen as they enter upon this third stage, and attempt to establish among themselves a worthy civilization under the law of liberty.

We cannot too greatly emphasize the fact that in religion we are now free, and that, with our freedom, our duty and our responsibility are just beginning. But to learn the meaning of true religion, received into the mind to instruct the conscience, to strengthen the will, to sweeten the affections, and to bless the common life of man in all its parts, is a task not for a year or a generation. With freedom achieved and understood as it now is, we stand at the beginning of a new era, which opens with a promise more beautiful than any generation has ever known. While some are still mindful of their stripes, and are rubbing the places where the manacles chafed, and are still hot with wrath against the churches and the creeds that have oppressed them, those who are really at liberty, forgetting these things which are behind, are pressing forward. For them there is already a new heaven and a new earth. Old things have passed away.

At the last meeting of the Unitarian Club in Boston, Judge Lowell said that when the shortcomings of Unitarianism were descanted upon by others, we obeyed the instinct of self-defence. But, whenever others generously acknowledged the service our Church had rendered, it behooved us to think of our shortcomings. Certainly, humility is in order when we remember the great gifts we have received, and ask ourselves whether we have lived up to the maxim —"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." The knowledge of the choice gifts which are at our disposal may easily prompt us to utter "great swelling words"; but the conscience and the reason of every man, who has become a trustee of the liberties of the world and an executor of the law of righteousness, may very properly call him to self-examination, and even to humility. What judg-

ment upon himself shall he pronounce who is free to know all truth, and yet is ignorant; who sees new revelations coming into the world and becomes the organ of none of them; who has the opportunity to lead, but has no instinct of leadership; who is free to teach, but has not the teacher's gift; who is called upon as a free man to set new examples of righteousness, but shrinks from the turmoil out of which a righteous world is created?

By their fruits ye shall know them. He is the free man in whom the mystery of goodness manifests itself. He is the apostle of freedom who is so inspired by truth and righteousness that no bonds can hold him. By the experience of all true men who have been in bondage since the world began, it has been proved that freedom of the spirit has been won and defended by those who have exercised themselves to have a conscience devoid of offence toward God and man, who have been humble and teachable, who have given themselves to righteousness and the truth, who have wrought in love and in wisdom, who have followed the power from on high; and who, through loving hearts and willing hands, have brought this power to bear in all their works and ways.

For a generation to come it might be well for Unitarians to say but little about liberty, while they bring forth works meet for liberty. We could boast of the men and women who have been produced in the genial air of freedom. We can without confusion submit the record of the contributions they have made to the reforms and charities which bless our modern life. We can without shame stand up before the leaders of thought in all departments of progress without fear that they will convict our Church of unreason or absurdity. But the great gift of liberty requires of us that we shall now show not only individuals but churches and groups of churches and forms of fellowship which shall manifestly produce the highest form of life of which the church is capable. It is required of us that we shall, "else sinning greatly," show a more excellent way, not only to bring grace, mercy, and peace into the hearts of individual men and women, but also to bring many human beings together in beautiful forms of fellowship, in order that these things may shine abroad in a world which sorely needs them.

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Unitarianism as a Religion for Every Day

BY

Rev. JOHN W. DAY

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BOSTON

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GEO. H. ELLIS, PRINTER, 272 CONGRESS ST., BOSTON.

RELIGION FOR EVERY DAY.

BY REV. JOHN W. DAY.

The test to which all forms of religion must come at last is the test of daily use. If it is true to the mind which looks at things more than names, if it has direct and veritable application to the problems of real life; and, if it passes beyond the correlated scheme of thought into the complex facts of existence, bringing there some efficient principle of order, religion will be satisfying. But if religion is a sublimated department of life, if it is the translation of powerful motives into ineffectual archaisms, if it is the turning away from life toward thoughts and statements and aims which can be connected with experience only by effort and continual readjustment, then religion, to the Unitarian, will not be satisfying. It is his aim to express religion in its simplest terms in order that its potency may come most directly into human life.

In his attachment to essentials, and to those forms and statements only in which the essentials are operative, we care very much that all essentials shall be regarded. Religion in its simplest terms does not mean religion at its lowest terms. We believe in religion for every day; but the every-day religion, which is only a title for the average and mediocre, the contented and worldly aim, is as insufficient to us as to others. The lay Pharisee is as abhorrent as the ecclesiastical Pharisee, the empirical hypocrite not more admirable than the religious hypocrite. We do not, therefore, wholly reject those creeds to which we cannot subscribe. While we do not adopt them, we try, none the less, to appreciate them. A religion for every day cannot disregard the religion of other days. What in past times put iron in the blood and made morality strenuous, what made men indifferent to pain and serene in persecution, what made faith in God a faithfulness among men, and turned faulty theologies where they

contributed to faultless lives,— these elements must not be lost in the changes of faith. We look with sympathy and understanding upon other doctrines to save from them that which will give depth and force to our own. We are not unmindful of the course of history and the development of religious philosophy. We try to discover and profit by their tendencies, because they help the working force of religion in modern experience.

Unitarianism may be specifically distinguished in the way it uses the truths called orthodox as well as in its differences from those views. The central ideas which have characterized historic Christianity we give the acceptance experience permits. Their speculative place and value are recognized in being subordinated to their value in actual living. Belief, and the application of belief, is a process whose main importance is in the application. A belief that is not useful is hardly worth disputing, and that is the central continuity of Christian doctrine which may be traced in the divine succession of good lives. There is scarcely any creed, with truth enough to keep it, which may not be found partly incorporated in the lives of people who are reproached with destroying creeds. Follow the cardinal points, and it will be found that we apply the principles which have been mainly identified with doctrines. We have kept what we could use, and have thereby retained a connection with the main lines of Christian faith from which no denials can ever separate us. The patents on truth have all run out, and every man can use the faith that makes faithful without conditions.

From this point of view the most conservative belief is that which transmits the most power for daily life, that in which the friction is least, the machinery simplest, and the product most abundant. Because the Unitarian receives the primary truths of religion in original packages is a strange reason for thinking he does not use them. He unpacks the theological boxes, unties the creed parcels, and distributes their contents with regard to their utility. His needs for this life must first be attended to; and, while we can claim no exclusive use of this method, we are content to rest under the honorable reproach of applying it with reference to every belief that comes under our notice. In the Unitarian method there is a natural process of sifting practice from theory,

truth from doctrine, life from history, and the lessons of experience from the recommendations of sects. The Unitarian likes the kind of faith he can put his hand on when he needs it. He chooses what makes for edification, he stands by what stands by him, he takes religion for every-day use. He finds it in his business, reminding him how the laws of integrity underlie all lasting prosperity. It walks with him on the street, strengthening him against the evil he sees, and opening his eyes to the good in men which it is easy not to see. It is under his sorrow, bracing up his fortitude and consoling his grief and developing the sense of things eternal which do not pass away. It is with him through temptation, in his admiration of good men whose example is his rebuke and encouragement, and in his veneration of noble lives far above his own, yet not too far to attract it, and in his grateful reverence toward that man of men whose purity withstood the world, and whose gentleness and courage, love, truth, and sacrifice, having been an acknowledged pattern to the saints, are above them all in mastery of human life.

Christianity is to the Unitarian more incarnate than it seems to him to be through any other teaching, because he alone does not scruple to accept the full implications of an incarnation. The Unitarian does not stop with an imperfectly human Christ who can go with him only part way, and who only in a limited sense can be said to be a man. The Unitarian objects to no exaltation of the man Jesus to the level of divinity so long as there is no derogation of his manhood in the process. Jesus is to him the first born among many brethren, among whom he is one. Not as a figure of speech, but in all that the name can imply in such connection, Jesus is our brother; and this, the distinctive note of Unitarianism, is a belief which brings religion in human shape and substance where it will have the whole effect of example and inspiration. To know that Jesus was a man like us is to put his influence where it will do most to make us men like him. No separation can excuse our poor performance. His perfection is not in another range of life, — a continual vision and yet our continual despair. It is the height toward which every upward pathway lifts us, and it is in organic relation with every soul born into the world. Thus, however far above us, the elevation is never isolation.

The influence of Jesus is always within the sphere of human imitableness, and in every part of our nature reaches us by a real and vital bond. He is at once far and near, and to no one more than to the Unitarian can Jesus become the companion and master of men. He makes religion a human thing, a higher power in every-day living.

The effect of this method of using the intellectual, moral, and personal forces of religion, is to reduce the word expression of faith and to increase its life expression. It is easy to accept the doctrine which it may be difficult to live. Life is the test of faith. The result, therefore, is not immediately obtainable nor the judgment at once to be pronounced. An argument, a conformity, a sacramental fidelity, is quickly concluded and the outcome estimated. Not so a character, a morality, a religion. As regards the length of his creed, the Unitarian seems to choose the easy course, but not as regards its requirements. His belief is not an easy one to live up to. The religion most helpful in daily life must, for that reason, be the hardest one to practise, since it allows no substitution for fidelity, enters into every way, and admits no excuses, however sanctified. No other righteousness, no self-righteousness, will suffice any man. Virtue is held inviolable, and only by merit are its honors gained. To this hard service the Unitarian hears religion call the faithful man. But he believes the hardness is inspiring, the service honorable, and the reward such as with a good conscience he can accept. He takes the point of view of the woman who said that she liked the Unitarian religion because it swept under the mats.

This uncompromising morality, which is the accepted Unitarian emphasis on religion, is often referred to as though it were insufficient. But it is not "mere morality" which is meant: it is full morality, and this ideal we are not ashamed to be known by, though we claim nothing in accepting it. We are much more likely to be condemned by it than for it. Wherever it appears and under whatever name, we declare for the religion of honest vision, clear-minded faith, and divine assistance, which is measured more by behavior than by professions, more by conduct than by creed, more by ordinary habit than by exceptional fervor, and which is so formed as to enter readily into the every-day life of the world

with grace and power. In so far as it meets men at those points where they most need religion, such a religion is the glory of this life ; and, because it is the best religion to live by in this world, we believe it will best fit men to live in the next world.

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UNITARIAN IDEALS.

BY REV. CHARLES F. DOLE.

May we venture to use the word "Unitarian" in describing the highest conceivable ideals of human life? What if we are reminded at once that the beauty of these very ideals has shone before the faces of men long before a Unitarian church existed? What if men in a score of different communions, who have no use for the Unitarian name, tell us that our beautiful ideals are theirs also? What if it should prove that many of our own people hardly recognize these mighty ideals as their own?

Let us, however, in all modesty boldly suggest that the fundamental and characteristic idea of our churches is unique as compared with any religious organization which has hitherto existed. Grant that noble and prophetic souls in all ages have caught a vision of the kingdom of God. These great idealists have been merely individuals. The historic religions and churches to which they belong have never been directed with singleness of aim toward the actual realization of the kingdom of God in this world. The Jewish Church did not even profess to be a means for carrying out the ideals of its prophets.

So far as we can learn about the early Christian Church in the days of its simplicity, it waited for the coming of God's kingdom out of the skies. The history of the Catholic Church is the record of almost everything else except the earnest attempt of its leaders and people to establish the rule of righteousness in this world. The men and women in it who sought to make their visions real, were almost as solitary as the Hebrew prophets or as Jesus himself. The story of Protestantism shows nowhere, till a very recent time, the concerted effort of any of its sects or branches to make the visions of its seers an actual fact upon this earth. Even the

chivalric missionary endeavors of the last half-century have been spent with the purpose of making converts, rather than of making men. The development of manhood, the realization of a truly civilized society, the perfection of a just and free State, has been incidental to the making of Christians and the gathering them into the Church.

Indeed, the habitual attitude of very respectable men toward all the ideal things has been that of a worshipful admiration mingled with practical distrust. Men have liked to be shown their grand ideals on Sunday in church, as they might occasionally be introduced into a gallery of pictures and statues. It was always delightful to hear of the wonderful Christ. It was fascinating to speculate upon the possibilities of the millennium. What church has been organized in the sole and supreme faith that the Christ-life is the universal human pattern of the normal and healthy man? What church has been gathered with the definite and practical purpose to create the conditions of the kingdom of heaven here and now?

The Unitarian churches are composed of imperfect men and women, and are marked by the human faults that touch all organizations. But it is their unique character that among all the churches of Christendom they exist in order to make the highest human ideals actual in individual life, in society, and in the State. Here is a very uncommon attitude toward ideal things. It is the attitude, not of the observer or even of the admirer who looks on with wonder, but of the practical workman or artist who draws by a pattern or model. The mere observer thinks the pattern too difficult and out of his range altogether. But the engineer or artist is here to do the precise thing which the model requires.

The Unitarian churches thus begin where other churches leave off. Other churches conceive the glorious ideals, but hold them to be subordinate, for the present at least, to various prudential interests. Their members can really be very good Christians merely by worshipping Christ. One can remain essentially selfish and unsocial, and yet be in good, regular, and orthodox standing. Unitarians are committed to follow and work out their beautiful ideals, and their churches have no reason for existence, except as through their means these ideals are daily realized. As touching

their ideals, they maintain a new ideal. *What are ideals for*, they say, *except to carry out?*

The Unitarian conception of personal character grows out of the most universal doctrine of Christianity. This doctrine is that we are the children of God. And what does this mean? God is love, or beneficence. Men, therefore, are ideally the children of love, or the doers of beneficence. They partake of the beneficent nature. Let them live, then, like children of God. The one work of their lives is to carry good will. Fulness of life consists in amplitude of loving service. Go over to this order of life, God seems to say, and never fear that his care will forsake you. Who ever tried this divine fashion, and found it to fail?

The Unitarian teaching about Jesus is not dogmatic or negative. It is a positive and most bracing corollary of Jesus' own profoundest conviction. Jesus held that the true man is in immediate and vital relation with the immanent and living God. This relation is not exceptional for a single son of God. It is the universal law. Men have practically narrowed the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God through the worship of a unique Christ. Unitarians go with Jesus in the sweeping thought of a divine brotherhood of humanity. Cease worshipping Jesus. Begin yourself to live the life of the ideal Son of God. You will not love Jesus less. You will not bow in less humility before the vision of the perfect love. You will be that which Jesus was,— an actual child of God. Where is higher or more inspiring teaching than this? Is the sublime death on the cross the only proof of its truth? Nay, in a myriad of homes you will likewise find witness to it.

The wonderful fact about all ideal things is that they grow radiant and commanding, as we face their way. Merely admire them and then forsake them, and they may lose their lustre. But begin to work them out, and they come into new clearness. Here, for instance, is the ideal of the highest conduct of human business. All that men often have seen here — all that multitudes of Bible readers still see — is to be honest. It is a very poor Unitarian church, not fit to have a place in the Year Book, where the mere preaching of honesty is tolerable. A new ideal comes in sight everywhere among us. It is the ideal of service. What if you keep

your engagements exactly, but your whole business confers no advantage upon society, or is only a method of personal gain? What if you claim what the law gives you, but the bargain itself wrongs the other party? What if you keep within the law, but are essentially ungenerous? Who can enjoy a transaction in business that does not bring advantage to his neighbor? All of a true man's business must be a part of the service of humanity. Every transaction ought to be an expression of a brother's good will. This is the Unitarian ideal to-day. Are not our churches organized to win men to this ideal? Where this ideal is not made to shine, the church is a failure.

There was once an ideal of human society which divided men into the sheep and the goats, saints and sinners, the elect of God and his enemies. Men looked down with an air of superiority upon the multitudes. Caste raised its icy barriers in churches. The ideal rule — that men must forgive their enemies — was practically shelved by "Christian" nations, whose customary religion let them keep the most murderous armaments that the world ever saw. But a new ideal comes into sight. It is the ideal of men and women who have no enemies. Who are we, children of God, that we should hate or despise any of the human race, our weak or ignorant brethren? The grand word comes, "Be ye perfect," — that is, all-round in your love, — "even as your heavenly Father is perfect." We have a gospel for "the lame and the halt and the blind," for the men in penitentiaries, for the wild Indians, for the enfranchised blacks, for oppressed Spaniards and Cubans. Where human need is, distrust and suspicion must stand aside and human love must go to the rescue. It is no valid Unitarian church where this gospel is not preached and believed and carried into practice. The Unitarian church that permits the spirit of caste to enslave men and women falsifies its principles.

What, now, is our ideal aim in our relations to the vast multitude of churches about us? Our ideal on this point absolutely forbids antagonism or exclusiveness. Our work is not to exaggerate differences between ourselves and our neighbors. Neither do we desire to bring other churches under the Unitarian name. Our work is rather to make the most possible of the deep and substantial grounds of agree-

ment whereon all good men must stand. Never were so many ready to join hands in their regard for justice and humanity. We all believe in a good God. We all hope for untold possibilities of human welfare. Our work, then, is pre-eminently to set forth our ideals so persuasively as to win men not merely to respect them, but to adopt them. Let all the churches around us once accept our ideals of the individual life, of business, of society, and of the State, and the dogmatic misapprehensions that have befogged Christendom will disappear. The supreme fact that the world wishes to know to-day of the Unitarian churches is that they heartily follow their own ideals.

Once more, our churches are unique in respect to their political ideal. Whereas it has often been taught that the Church has nothing to do with politics, we hold to the closest union of Church and State. We do not mean a formal and outward union, but an identity of purpose. The Church, like the State, is a true democracy. The Church contemplates and plans a government of the people and for the people. It supplies moral and spiritual motive and courage for every worthy political effort. It is because this is God's world, and we are his children, that we dare to believe in honest government and to take the chivalrous risks of reform. There may be churches content to say their conventional prayers, while unscrupulous politicians bring their gifts into the treasury; but a Unitarian church has no right to be, in the atmosphere of whose spiritual, ethical, and political ideals wrong-doers will not instinctively find rebuke and contrition. It has been said of the old-time heroes that they went forth from their churches to die for their country in battle. It must be said of the new generation of our youth that they are accustomed to rise up from the worship of God in our churches, to give their lives with an equally generous abandon in building the city of God.

THE American Unitarian Association is the working missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It seeks to promote sympathy and united action among Liberal Christians, and to spread the principles which are believed by Unitarians to be essential to civil and religious liberty and progress and to the attainments of the spiritual life. To this end it supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes, sells, and gives away books, sermons, tracts, hymn-books, and devotional works.

Tracts descriptive of Unitarian principles, doctrines, and methods, are sent free to any who desire to know what Liberal Christianity stands for and works for. A list of these free tracts will be sent on application. A full descriptive catalogue of the publications of the Association, including doctrinal, devotional, and practical works, will be sent to all who apply. All religious books by Unitarian authors are kept on sale, and will be sent on receipt of price. A list of such books, with prices, will be furnished upon request.

The Association is supported by the voluntary contributions of churches and individuals. Annual subscriptions of any amount are solicited. Address communications and contributions to the Secretary at his office, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The following is the simple

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath to the American Unitarian Association, a corporation established by law in the State of Massachusetts, the sum of.....dollars.

OUR MISSION AND OUR MISSIONS

A Message to Unitarians

BY

Rev. MINOT J. SAVAGE, D.D.

SERIES NINE
NUMBER ONE

Our Faith.

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
onward and upward forever.

Typical Covenant of a Unitarian Church.

In the love of the truth, and the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man.

Our Declaration

(*As expressed in the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association*).

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose."

(*As expressed by the National Conference of Unitarian and Other Christian Churches, at Saratoga, N. Y., in 1894.*)

"These Churches accept the religion of Jesus, holding, in accordance with his teaching, that practical religion is summed up in love to God and love to man.

"The Conference recognizes the fact that its constituency is Congregational in tradition and polity. Therefore, it declares that nothing in this Constitution is to be construed as an authoritative test; and we cordially invite to our working fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our spirit and our practical aims."

OUR MISSION AND OUR MISSIONS.

BY REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE, D.D.

I AM one of those who believe that Unitarianism is providential, one of the divinely appointed forces of the world, that it has a mission, and that, having a mission and being alive, it must have missions. We are not simply disciples, learners of truth. If we play our part as we ought, we are also apostles, those sent, messengers carrying the word of a higher hope.

Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth,"—this is a prophecy, you see,— "and the truth shall make you free. In his profoundest thought, then, truth and freedom go together, the one being the source of the other. And yet is it not a little remarkable that the Unitarian churches are the first body of Christians to exist on the face of the earth, so far as I know, who have dared to be free? I know no other body that has dared to trust itself utterly and simply to the truth, and thus be free. Every other body of Christians with which I am acquainted is bound, self-bound, to certain statements inherited from a past, the main characteristics of which were limitations of knowledge and a lower type of civilization than that which at present we enjoy.

I am well aware that there are men in the pews by the thousand, in these other churches, who do think freely. I am also well aware that there are ministers by the hundred, possibly by the thousand, who also think freely. But, in so far as they do, are they quite true to their or-

dination vows? Are they quite loyal to the standards of the Church whose officers they are and to whose mission they have committed themselves? I bring no railing accusation, but I cannot understand how they can logically or fairly consider themselves free; for freedom means, not flying abroad as far as you please on wings of imagination and investigation, if you are all the time under the necessity of coming back and alighting within certain definite and preordained limits. This is not freedom. Or, if you have gone abroad in your thinking and have not come back, concealing the fact for the peace of the Church,— this is not freedom.

We have dared to be free, because we have felt that in an infinite universe beyond any limits that mind can outline there is forever God, and his truth and his life. Newer facts and conceptions than those of the past have been discovered, and we dare not shut ourselves away from any part of the divine truth or the divine life.

We are free then, not as of right, but because we hold it to be our bounden and most sacred duty; for truth is sacred, and truth only is sacred. A mistake, a misconception, a limitation of knowledge, however venerable, is still only a mistake, a misconception, a limitation. We are committed only to one thing,— to finding the truth, to living the truth, to spreading the truth, to helping organize the truth of God into the growing life of the world.

The Unitarian mission, then, is this of the truth-seeker and the truth-proclaimer. Thousands of men have, as they suppose, outgrown the limits, not only of the Church, which they *have* outgrown, but of religion as well. It is our mission to show them that religion is something that cannot be outgrown, that it only becomes

grander when freely growing and clothed in the fairer colors of truth, woven no matter in what nation or under whatever name. We have a task assigned to us, one of the grandest and most magnificent of all the world,— a task that the other churches cannot consistently and logically enter upon; for, just in so far as they do enter upon it, they cease to be true and loyal to the standards which they have sworn to defend and uphold. The old universe has passed away. The old thought of the origin and nature of man has passed away,— passed, I mean, from free and intelligent minds. The old thought of destiny, of salvation, has passed away, or is rapidly being left behind.

In other words, the theology of Christendom, as it has been handed down to us for the last thousand years, sprung out of certain definite conceptions of the universe and of God and of man; and, to the growing intelligence of the modern world, the new revelation that is coming to man is displacing these conceptions. And the work most needed to-day is the reorganization, the reconstruction of theological thought, in order to bring it into accord with that which is the demonstrated truth of our Father in heaven; for only thus can religion itself be saved as the practical possession of the common people of the world. And this great work of intellectual reconstruction, of teaching the new truth about God and the universe, and man and destiny,— this is the holy privilege of the Unitarian churches.

As I said a moment ago,— let me emphasize it by a brief reiteration, — this is our work and ours alone, because we are free, because we are not only disloyal to our past in undertaking it, but because only by undertaking it can we be really and truly loyal.

Another thing which constitutes a part of our great mission: There are thousands of people in the old-time churches all over the country and all over the world who are growing more and more dissatisfied. They are troubled, they are thinking, they are questioning. As Oliver Wendell Holmes has said somewhere,— I quote his idea, not his words,— this free thought and these new ideas are in the air; and people must shut themselves away from the common intellectual air of the world if they do not wish to catch the infection.

These new thoughts are in magazines, are in newspapers. No matter if they be only attacked, if they be only ridiculed: that calls attention to them. They are, then, in all the air. The new universe is creeping into the consciousness of men. It is a slow process. You know it took the world two or three hundred years to get rid of the Ptolemaic thought of the universe, and become accustomed to the Copernican; and even now we talk in Ptolemaic phrases,— we speak of the sun's rising and setting still, which is only a fragment of the old Ptolemaic idea. So we need not wonder if it takes time for these new thoughts to filter down through and color the common thinking of common men and women. But the new universe is coming upon us; and, in the new conception, God is not away off in the heavens: he is here, — the thrilling life and soul and body and hope and uplift and growth of the universe and man. This is coming. And so the new thought about the origin and nature of man, that he is not any longer a fallen being and under God's wrath, but a rising being, and led by God's love, whether he knows it or not,— all these ideas are coming into the world. People are shrinking from the doctrines of Calvinism that they used to accept

that men are foreordained to be saved and to be lost — as passing phases of the old beliefs, and not to be accepted in the light of to-day.

All these things people are revolting from; and so in the pews everywhere people are beginning to question this point of the old theology or that. They are beginning to wonder whether they ought to stay where they are; and yet they are afraid to go. Why? Because they know, whatever may be the defects of their thinking, that this religious life in them, the consciousness of God, and that they are God's children,— that this is the dearest possession of the world; and they wonder whether, if they give up the religious thinking they have been accustomed to, they are going to lose this. At any rate, they are afraid that they may lose it. And this, they feel, is life; and they are right in that feeling. Rather than lose that, I would have them stay forever in the old: only I believe that it is safe to follow God, and that there is no loss possible in following him.

I believe that it is our Unitarian mission to prove to the world that men can keep their reverence and their love and their trust and their hope without doing injustice to their brains. I believe that God's true church is big enough to hold heart and brains, too, and that there is no reason for leaving either of them at the door when we enter. It is our business to teach and illustrate in our lives the permanence and the sacredness of reverence and worship and tenderness and trust and hope, all the sweet sacrednesses that have associated themselves with the religious life of the past. All these finer and sweeter things that we love and that go under the name of religion shall bloom in the light and summer fragrance of this new revelation and in the free air and under the sun-

shine of the eternal love. It is our business, our mission to the world, to teach and illustrate that great truth, so we can offer to these discontented ones, who can no longer honestly stay in the old belief, a religious home, religious opportunity to live and to work, so that they shall feel that they have lost nothing by hearing the voice of God and going out at his bidding.

And there is one other class of people to whom, as I believe, we have a special mission. Mr. Moody has told us, if the newspapers have reported him correctly, that out of the seventy millions of people in this country not more than thirty millions ever go to any church. I hope that is not true. But, if it is, here is more than one-half of the population of the land that the old-time churches, for one reason or another, do not reach. Many of them have gone away from those churches because the teachings seemed to them unreasonable, because the God preached seemed cruel and unjust, because there seemed no hope for man. They have thrown off the mental shackles, they have revolted against the moral cruelty. There is no hope of getting them back into these associations which they have left.

If they are to be religious at all, we must give them a new thought about religion. I take it, and this statement is based upon such experience as I have had with this kind of men, that they are not glad to lose their belief in God; they are not glad to give up the hope of immortal life; they have gone out because it seemed to them honest and manly, even at the cost of surrendering precious hopes. They have ceased to believe in God, because, as they have looked over human society, they could not accept the kind of universe they discovered, or thought they discovered, as the work of a wise and lov-

ing God. They are troubled about the dark places of the earth; they are troubled by the limitations, the inequalities, the pains, the sorrows and the wrongs; and they say that they cannot find any adequate reason for believing that there is that in us which smiles at death and passes through death as through a cloud that touches us not; and so they are "without God and without hope in the world," in this true and divine sense.

And it is our mission, something that ought to appeal to our enthusiastic devotion, to go to these wandering, unfed thousands, and tell them about God, our Father, our trust, our hope, and see if we cannot find them a place to stand, a little work to do, and an outlook that has in it something of cheer.

The old-time religions were not missionary. Religion was something that pertained to the family. The stranger had no right to intermeddle: it was an impertinence and an intrusion for an outsider to be present. It pertained to the family, then to the tribe, then to the city or the nation. But, as the world grew, and there came into the mind of man some foregleam of the magnificent idea that we are all of one blood, then there dawned on human consciousness the conception of world-wide religion. So the advancing religions of the world are missionary religions.

Does it not appeal to you, this idea,— that, if you have something that is worth anything, a view, a truth, an inspiration, a hope, it is worth handing to somebody else? If your religion is not worth giving away, it is not worth your keeping. And this is one of those things that increases by dispensing it. The more love you give away, the more tenderness you give away, the more pity, the more sympathy, the more help, the more truth-teaching,

the more hope, the more of them all you have. So that, if I find a man who does not care whether his neighbor shares his great beliefs and hopes and inspirations with him, then I have little respect for his convictions. I do not believe he has anything which he values much unless he is impelled by the generosity of his soul to share it with his fellows.

If our Unitarianism, then, is worth anything, we shall wish to do what we can to give it away. Organized Unitarianism in this country is very young. There is to-day no organization that can try a man for heresy: our organizations are only working organizations, that is all.

In the year 1825 the American Unitarian Association was formed. Before that the leaders and fathers had opposed an organization because they did not wish to form another sect: they only wished to fight out the battle of liberty in the churches where they were. But their liberty was not allowed in the old churches; and they were forced out, and so became, in that sense, a sect, whether they would or not. And then some noble men determined that there should be a missionary organization,—an organization which should be the missionary arm of the churches. It has no ruling power over the churches: it is simply our servant. It was organized, I say, in 1825. I wish to read to you three or four words which show the purpose for which it was then organized.

"First, to collect and diffuse information respecting the state of Unitarian Christianity in our country.

"Second, to produce union, sympathy, and co-operation among liberal Christians.

"Third, to publish and distribute books and tracts inculcating the correct views of religion in such form and

at such price as shall afford all an opportunity to become acquainted with Christian truth.

"Fourth, to supply missionaries, especially in such parts of our own country as are destitute of a stated ministry.

"Fifth, to adopt whatever other measures as may hereafter seem expedient,— such as contributions in behalf of clergymen with insufficient salaries or in aid of building churches."

That, then, is what the Unitarian organization meant in 1825. It has broadened and increased its work since then; and yet it is crippled every year of its life simply for lack of means.

I wish now to give you a few specimens of the lines in which it is carrying on its work, and see if it appeals to you, and see if you care to do anything to help them,— help them and help us; for they are simply our agency.

In the first place, one principal part of the practical missionary work in which we are concerned is the publication and distribution of tracts and sermons,— such tracts and sermons as are considered clear statements of the new views of the universe and God and man, and duty and destiny, for which we stand. These are published by the thousand, and scattered freely all over the land. And these sermons, through what are called the Church Door and the Post-office Missions, along with tracts on all these various subjects, are scattered, as I said, all over the country. And there is one peculiar and very interesting phase of this work. These sermons, for example, visit people who have no other point of contact with our thought and life. I know of cases out in Nebraska where a sermon goes to one household. Perhaps they are ten miles away from another family who

would look at it if they had it. It is read there, and sent on to the next house, and the next, and covers, perhaps, half a State, until it is all worn out. So these messengers of the new truth and hope are travelling in this way through the West and through the South.

Then another thing. There are places where there are six or ten or fifteen people in a little village or town, where there is no church that represents their new thought, and where they are not strong enough to have one. These people gather together, and organize a little church service. They sing hymns, they read the Scriptures, somebody repeats a prayer, and a sermon is read. And so a little church service is held. There are hundreds, thousands, of places like this over the country.

Then there is another phase of our work. There are poor old churches, mainly throughout New England, that have been drained of their once vigorous life. Shall we let them die? For example, there is the old Pilgrim Church at Plymouth. Of course, most of the strong and vigorous young men of Plymouth do not settle down at home. They go to Boston, then come to New York; they go to Chicago, to Hawaii, to Alaska, – all over the world. These young men are the vigor, the soul, the life, of enterprises all over the country and all over modern civilization. The old churches taught and trained them; and sometimes these old churches need care, just as our fathers needed care when they were too old to take care of themselves. Shall we let them die? No. Because other boys like these that are gone out are being born and growing up there still in these old churches. And so it is a part of our Unitarian Association work to nourish and help and keep alive these venerable sources of our life, our love, our worship, and our hope.

And then there is another phase of our missionary work. As you will readily understand, all over this country there are towns where there is reading and thinking going on. There are a few people who are ready to welcome our new faith. There are parts of the country where the word "Unitarianism" would probably not be even understood, and where its grandest statements of religious truth are looked upon as mere blasphemy, merely because they are not in accord with the old-time traditions and theories. But in these places there are a few who are ready to think; and in any number of these places there are enough so that they are ready to organize a little church, provided they can have some help. They are not strong enough yet to go alone. They must be nourished. They must have some one sent to them as a teacher; and, until they grow strong enough to support him, a part of that support must be assured them; and in this way churches are growing up all over the country.

But, do you not see, this kind of growth is limited,—limited seriously for lack of means. There are in this State of New York to-day certain places where Unitarian churches are fairly begging and pleading to be born; but our missionary organizations are not rich enough to buy swaddling-clothes or a cradle for them. And so we tell them to wait, when perhaps another year the people who understand the situation will be more generous: perhaps in another year the people will learn to care more, and will give us the means to help them on to their feet. This kind of thing is going on all over the country and all the time. There is not a town in this country of five thousand people where a little Unitarian church might not be organized within two years if we had the money.

I am not a good beggar: I would starve rather than beg for myself. I am not begging now. I am telling you, as clearly and simply as I can, the magnificent opportunities that wait for you to help God, help men out of the old into the new, into a higher and simpler and sweeter and nobler life. If it appeals to you, help. That is the extent of my begging.

There is another phase of our work which needs at least brief attention. There are college towns all over the country, such as Ann Arbor in Michigan, Madison in Wisconsin, Ithaca in New York, where perhaps we might organize a little feeble Unitarian church, and let it grow large in ten or fifteen or twenty years, but where we need to do a different kind of work, where we need to have a strong man. Why? Because there are thousands of students assembling there from all over the State; and we need a man who in the presence of that young and growing life can teach the new truth intelligently and persuasively, so that these students, coming in contact with it, may learn what it means and may carry back home with them its results into their life-work, wherever they may be.

There is little use in trying to do anything new with a man after he is fifty, — that you know. A famous old professor at Harvard used to say, It is no use to argue with a man after he is sixty years old. I think you can put the limit nearer his youth than that. Very few people reconstruct their ideas after forty; but young men in the ferment of their studies and in contact with their new life can be wrought over into nobler and higher ideas, and fitted for a grander destiny.

And so we plant in these college towns churches, — and it takes a large amount of money to keep them running,

— to put there one of our abler men,— one competent to fill a position of responsibility like that.

Now these, friends, indicate to you in some brief fashion the kind of work that we are undertaking to do, the kind of work that the American Unitarian Association stands for. Now what shall we do about it? In my pleading, do not for a moment misunderstand my attitude towards Unitarians. I do not believe that there are any men or women on the face of the earth more generous, more munificent givers than they. But there is one peculiarity of their giving which I would change if I might. Let me instance a case as illustrating what I mean.

Two boys grew up in a certain town in New England, and went away and became successful business men. One of them, as he became old, in recognition and gratitude, built a magnificent church in his native village. The other one built a magnificent public library.

Now have I anything to say against the giving of a public library,— for you probably guess that that was given by the Unitarian; and the church was given, in this particular instance, by an Episcopalian,— have I anything to say against giving the public library? No. Unitarians, as I have said, have given magnificently. Through some sort of fear of being regarded as narrow, being regarded as sectarian, being regarded as illiberal, they are giving broadcast all over the land to everything, and sometimes a good deal more than they give to the support of their own special and peculiar religious ideas.

I have no fault to find with this generous and widespread giving; except this. If somebody comes to you representing one of the old-time churches or a young men's Christian association, or something of that sort,

and asks for money, before you give it to him, will you ask him this question: In the case of the young men's Christian association, will you ask him if any Unitarian is ever admitted to hold any position in the body? If they are willing to do anything for you or with you, except take your money? Will you put another question before you give,— if they would give to help build a Unitarian church if you appealed to them? Ninety-nine times in a hundred they would refuse absolutely to give a cent.

And yet you are accustomed to be liberal enough to give to the building of things that you do not believe in. Give, if you will, to all the world; but give to the things that are vital, — to the life of God in the soul first. And remember these streams that we talk about as liberality, and that flow all over the world,— these have their fountain-head in the liberal ideas for which our Unitarian Church stands. Here is the spring from which these streams flow. If you let the fountain-head dry up, then the wide-spread and beneficent results also must suffer. If I were worth fifty millions of money to-day, I would not give to any religious institution that would not reciprocate and give a little something to that which I believe in, too. If they would be generous enough to let the generosity go all round, well and good. But I appeal to you, first, to give for those great things in which lie the hope of the future.

Be generous, then, in helping on the life of this great religious movement which holds the future in its hands. Think a little as to whether you have ever sacrificed in your giving. Is there any person here who has ever given enough, so that he has gone without anything on account of it? There may be many. If there are any,

I would like to make the personal acquaintance of such a person.

Think carefully then; and, as God has given you ability, give back to Him through the service of his children in helping on the divine life, in which lie all the beauty and glory of this present world as well as the eternal future.

Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast given us the privilege of helping Thee. Let us remember that it is the divinest thing vouchsafed to us. Let us then share with Thee that work, Thy giving, in consecrating ourselves to Thy service and the service of Thy children. Amen.

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AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
25 Beacon Street, Boston

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Tracts descriptive of Unitarian principles, doctrines, and methods, are sent free to any who desire to know what Liberal Christianity stands for and works for. A list of these free tracts will be sent on application. A full descriptive catalogue of the publications of the Association, including doctrinal, devotional, and practical works, will be sent to all who apply. All religious books by Unitarian authors are kept on sale, and will be sent on receipt of price. A list of such books, with prices, will be furnished upon request.

The Association is supported by the voluntary contributions of churches and individuals. Annual subscriptions of any amount are solicited. Address communications and contributions to the Secretary at his office, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The following is the simple

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath to the American Unitarian Association, a corporation established by law in the State of Massachusetts, the sum of.....dollars.

An Epistle to Unitarians

BY

Rev. H. C. De LONG

SERIES NINE
NUMBER TWO

AN EPISTLE TO UNITARIANS.

BY REV. HENRY C. DE LONG.

THIS is not a pope's encyclical. It is not even a bishop's circular letter. It is only a familiar epistle to Unitarians by one of them. May I begin by congratulating you upon the ancient and honorable name by which we are known, and in which we have reason to rejoice? It stands almost alone amidst the sect-names as one too large and inclusive to permit of the sect-spirit. It comes down to us across the centuries with the impress upon it of one who, gathering into himself the best in the religion to which he was heir, said, "God is one," and set the faith that sprang from him to the tune of the highest unity. Whenever the name we bear meets with derision and scorn, our readiest and most effective reply is that it was good enough for the founder of the noblest religion of the world, and we are not ashamed to be fellow-believers with him. It has also the unconscious testimony of those who disown it, who, however they may play with their hypostases and transform them into persons, always conclude with saying, Yet there are not three Gods, but one God. Further, the name carries with it the history of some of the finest souls, who for their testimony on its behalf endured suffering and martyrdom, sowing the seeds of liberty whose harvest we have gathered.

This inclusive name is ours; and never was it so rich in meaning as now, when the growing thought of man

has made the idea of unity the supreme expression of the order and harmony of the universe. Not alone have the imperfect Gods retired and given place to God as one, but all the varied facts and laws, each with its separate field, have been marshalled under the supreme conception of unity working in all and through all.

When we say God is one, we are putting in the terms of religion what the scientist means when he says the universe is one, that a law of order binds all the facts of all the worlds together. If a mind like ours had been present when this planet began its career, unimaginable cycles ago, and had seen that liquid ball of fire shot from the sun, it would have hinted nothing to him of the world that was to be. In the cooling of the earth's crust, in the dawn of vegetable life, in the ice age that seemed bent on destruction as if to show that the Builder had failed in his plan, he would have had no hint that out of these unwelcome conditions the earth was at last to bloom in beauty, fruit with harvests, and man arise gifted with power to trace the stages by which he had come to be as the crown of the creative intent. But all the while the law of unity in creation was advancing toward its goal; and, as we read its history, while we bow in reverence at the sublime conception of the great seers, of God as one, we are thrilled with awe at this sublime confirmation of it. Happy are our eyes that we see it!

Also, because of the religious content of our name, we enter deeply into the truth of the unity of man. Because we are one in God, are we more surely one with each other. Identity of blood is a strong tie to bind men together, to make their interests one. But it is not strong enough for all the exigencies of our life. Not seldom does it give way under the stress of selfishness and the

clashing of interests in this mixed nature of ours. Questions of property will snap it, feuds will take all meaning from it. Contests between races and civilizations make it an idle tale. Nothing suffices but identity of spirit, but a consciousness that, whatever may happen, the same divine fire burns in the lowest and meanest as in the highest and noblest.

Our belief in the unity of man is difficult and staggering, when considered in its natural aspect. There are such awful contrasts in his condition and character that, when we look at man in his highest and in his lowest, it seems as if there were an inseparable chasm dividing one from another. Take the most favored and cultivated members of our race, with their larger brain, their moral achievement, their spiritual illumination, and set them beside the feeblest, just emerging from the animal condition, of weak mental power, with their life in the senses, the slaves of outward conditions which waken none of the aspirations known to us, and you will think that it is the vainest dream that they are brethren and heirs of the same destiny, that the lowest shall rise to the summit the highest have won. The belief is only possible when you discern in the lowest the possibility of the highest, that the possibility which in one is in some degree achieved slumbers in the other, and, because it is divine, will be stirred into life, and a farther good than the best have attained, the farthest good possible, shall somehow be achieved. It is a daring faith, but we are pledged to it by the very grounds on which we hold the belief in our own divinity. God is no respecter of persons, we are not the chosen vessels of his favor; and the lot of the highest only foreshadows what will be the destiny of the lowest,— nay, the choicest specimens we

honor and reverence do but illustrate the good to which all must rise.

It is a further characteristic of the inclusiveness which is the genius of Unitarianism that it enters into the deep spiritual import of the great doctrines of Christendom. To say the whole truth about this, we must confess that Unitarians do not always have a spirit so large and fair, though Unitarianism does. Enough Unitarian preaching there is that does not leave Orthodoxy a leg to stand on. Yet it continues to stand,— from the force of habit maybe, but more likely from the fact that it holds much of the eternal truth of God, however partially it may conceive it.

We have learned that the law of evolution obtains in religion as in all other departments of man's endeavor, and that, however mistaken may be the form in which truth is cast, beliefs do not perpetuate themselves from age to age unless in them there is something divine, some word of God that answers to the reason and the heart of man. Now it is our happy privilege, while not accepting these doctrines in the form in which they are commonly held, still to be able to see that precious truth is folded away in them, and that, just because this is so, they maintain their place in the thought and reverence of man. Yet more, if we are large-minded and wise enough, we see that this special and partial way of holding them was the providential means of preserving them till man was wise enough to enter into their deep and universal meaning.

I shall make my thought clear if you will consider two illustrations of what I have in mind. I take first the doctrine of the incarnation of God in Christ. It is inexpressibly dear to the believers of it. Christ as a special

unique manifestation of God, as God manifest in the flesh, comes nearer to them than any other life lived in our world, nearer than all other expressions of the Divine. For one, I should be sorry not to feel and to be touched by all that they mean. In substance it is true. The heart of it is that it is in and through man that God is revealed, that man at his best is the incarnation of God, and that Jesus is man at his best.

Three views of Christ have been held in the Christian centuries: first, that he was man; second, that he was more than man, but less than God, a being intermediate between the two, whom God chose for a special work; third, that he was God himself. The first two conceptions of him are found in our New Testament writings. Our earliest Gospels know him only as a man, and as the Messiah who was never thought to be anything but human. The purely Jewish mind could not think of him as other than human, for to it God never assumed the nature of man. The second view, that Christ was a being higher than man, but less than God, is found in the writings of Paul and in the Fourth Gospel, which dates from a later time. These two views were held almost alone for the first two centuries. In the third century there was some change in them, but not till the fourth century did the third view become the ruling creed of Christendom. One cannot study the first two forms of belief about him in the early centuries without seeing that they made him a kind of automaton, cut off from God, and speaking not from himself, but as some higher intelligence spoke through him. The naturalness and charm which pervade our earliest Gospels have disappeared, and in their place has come a wholly artificial and made-up image. If man was ever to get back the at-

tractive and lovable personality that moves for us through the pages of our Gospels, the providence of history ordained that it should be by means of the conception of Christ as God, which in a better time should change into a thought of man and God in their vital relations to each other, which should restore Christ to the ranks of humanity, and make him for us the typical illustration of how our humanity is in nature one with God.

I choose as a second illustration the doctrine of the atonement. Through many different forms it has been held that the sufferings and death of Christ are efficacious in freeing man from the consequences of his sin and in securing for him the favor of God. What essential truth is there in this? The free mind of our time is clear that the old view of this doctrine is not true. It is largely disowned or ignored in communions that once affirmed it as necessary to salvation. The sufferings of Jesus, then, were an illustration of the universal fact of human experience that we suffer for others, that the innocent suffer for the guilty. There is no department of our life with others in which this is not true. The law of suffering presides at our birth, it keeps company with us to our grave. You are a member of a family; and, as you rejoice in the welfare of other members of it, so you sorrow in the adversity which afflicts them. Let the shadow of evil fall upon one of them, and your heart is keenly wounded. If you could feel the woes of humanity, as of this little circle of your own flesh and blood, you, too, would be wounded for their transgressions.

The principle here illustrated by special instances might be carried into other doctrines which, founded on the teaching of Jesus, have been transformed so that he

would not recognize them, but which still have a soul of truth in them. It is our privilege to go beneath the form in which they have been cast to the substance of them, no longer putting them aside as outworn conceptions, but regarding them as truths of permanent value, which show us our connection with the past, and assure us that

> "One accent of the Holy Ghost
> The heedless world hath never lost."

But now I have flattered you enough by telling the truth about the faith you accept as yours, and the spirit in which I generously suppose you hold it. But I do not want you to be too happy. It is dangerous to be too happy. Sometimes it paralyzes the brain, sometimes it stops the action of the heart; and Unitarians have need of both. Properly, we may ask, Have Unitarians, have we as Unitarians, done full justice to the possibilities of this faith of ours? Have we come into the place we ought to hold? Have we had the influence upon the religious life of our time that by right we are entitled to? If not, why not? And what may we do toward the accomplishment of that end? I shall not accuse Unitarians of too much intellect. But I may say that one of our faults is an exaggeration of the intellectual side of religion. We have given the appearance of thinking that the intellectual side of religion is chief, but it is not: the emotional and will side of religion is chief. To think right is but a part of it. To put thought into moral passion, to turn moral passion into conduct and character,—this is the end of religion, this is what religion is for. We know well enough the reasons for this exaggeration. We had to make good our grounds for our difference from the theological conceptions against which we re-

volted or which revolted us; and, in doing so, we set up a habit of thinking that all religion had to do was to discover truth. It was but a minor part of it. Its more important office is to apply truth, to set it in relation with life, to set life in harmonious relations with truth, to become what we believe.

And, touching this, I think the wonder is both how good and how poor our preaching is. Considered intellectually and artistically, it is very good. I doubt if there is any other preaching in these respects as good as that of the average Unitarian pulpit. It is thoughtful, it has literary merit, it appeals to the best minds. If any people could be saved by such preaching, ours could be. But its fault is that it is too good after this fashion. No one of us in the pulpit that is not enslaved to literary models, who does not make his chief care what he shall say, who does not strive to round out his thinking, and who in doing so does not take something from its fervor and force. We read the best books, we preach as if we had read them, their style possesses us, and, when we would drive truth home, we feel as if it would detract somewhat from the elevation of our thought; and we leave it to go home of itself, forgetting that it may not know the way. I am not commending slipshod preaching, nor saying that any less care should be taken with it. But the care should be to make it a living message to living men and women who may not know all the philosophies, or, if they do, may not care to remember them, but who hunger to have their souls fed with thought and sentiment which shall raise them out of all that is unworthy in themselves, which shall persuade them that they can do this, which shall touch them with a mighty inspiration to compel them. There is no reason that the

illiterate Salvationist should have the masses flocking after him, that milder Orthodoxy should, and that our churches too often should be like wisdom's narrow way, with here and there a traveller. A layman of a neighboring church, and that a Unitarian, said to me, "Why, our minister preaches as if the salvation of every one of us was on his soul." Good for the minister, I say. It will be a fairer day for us, a fairer day for humanity, when we shall get such a grip on the souls of men, and make them feel with new force that we seek no lesser end than this.

Further, I wish to raise the question whether we have not minimized the sentiment of worship and of personal religious culture by reason of the undue stress we have placed on religion as truth-seeing rather than truth-feeling and truth-becoming. I turn back to Channing, who was aglow with the sentiment of piety; and I see that this was a strong and constant element in his preaching. One of his sermons that early made upon me a strong impression, and had much to do in opening to me the spiritual content of Unitarianism, was upon "Unitarian Christianity Most Favorable to Piety." It was a trenchant criticism upon the narrow and mechanical orthodoxy of his day. But it was much more than this: it was a glowing statement and illustration of the depth and power of our conception of religion to feed the heart as well as the mind, and enable us to enter into the soul of religious faith. I turn to Theodore Parker, and, beyond the iconoclasm which could not have been spared, I am moved by the lofty feeling, especially of the "Ten Sermons of Religion" and the seraph notes of joy and trust which he uttered in prayers which were pæans.

I am far enough from saying that we have lost this

noble strain of these representative leaders of the early day of our faith. Rather, I should say that never in this generation was it as strong and clear as now. But it needs to be more strong and clear. One too often feels that in our congregations the sentiment of worship burns rather dim and feeble. Frequently they are but audiences listening to what the minister and the choir say and sing, what the latter often sings in an unknown tongue, rather than personal and conscious sharers in the heights of lofty feeling, in the sense of God and their life in him which is the deep meaning of our worship. Many of those who compose the assembly are much clearer that they do not believe that prayer has any effect, because they no longer believe that it has the effect once ascribed to it of changing the divine purpose and making God remember what otherwise he might forget, than they are as to the meaning and value of this rapt moment of communion with him. Is it any good to pray, some will ask, since all is provided for in the divine order of the world? Is it anything more than praying to yourself, that you may quicken your feeling for good and your power to do it? Sometimes it is a little hopeless to try to clear up so muddled a mind. If, somehow, you could stir it to feeling of the high things involved, you might help it. At least, it is worth while to try. We meet each other on terms of friendliness, we pass from one superficial topic to another till we strike deeper into what is most important to us; and by our doing so we have helped each other, thought has kindled thought, feeling has answered to feeling, and we part as those enriched by our communion.

Perhaps this illustrates better than anything we can formally say what it means to lift our little minds toward the great Spirit of life and good in the act of prayer. You

ask me if I have any image of him; and I reply, I have not except the belief that the highest qualities in myself must be from him, and the feeling deeper than all thought that he is interested in my life. Then, as I pour out my aspiration for good of which I have caught sight, but have not altogether made my own, as I breathe contrition for the poverty of my spirit, as I utter my trust in him and seek his leading, I am refreshed and quickened, and shall take up my life from that point with fresh heart and hope. I cannot prove to you that there is anything in this. But I know there is, and that, poor and mean as my life is, it owes much to these moments of transcendent vision. Now this is what worship may and should do for all of us, what most of all we intend by our hours of worship together. You can find as good or better thinking about religion as any one of us, your trusted ministers, can give. The best thing we can do for one another is to enter into spiritual communion with one another, to respond to each other's highest feeling and purpose; and the spirit of all becoming that of each will make life for every one of us a finer blessing. I am persuaded that, if we could get this personal touch of each other, this communion of heart in the noblest things, it would kindle to a brighter flame our altars of worship. The hour in which it is held would be something we would not readily forego, its solemn peace would hover over us like a spell, and the "life whereof our nerves are scant" would find its way into us through our worship together.

I should like my final word to be that the church, or, if you prefer, our churches, are for the culture of personal religion. There shall be no lessening of the intellectual side of it,— to help men and women think clear and see straight, to know the grounds on which rational religion

rests, to understand that religious belief is not something different from other beliefs, or that we can affirm in this field of our life what we lay aside elsewhere. Nor shall there be the slightest lessening of the ethical side of religion. Conduct and character of the highest style shall be demanded. That there is no salvation but by personal righteousness, that there is no magical hocus-pocus to take its place, we shall urge with all the strenuousness which in an earlier time led our faith to be characterized as mere morality. "Mere morality," if there be such a thing, is none too abundant in our world. We have a pretty large contract, if we undertake to bring our generation up to it. But I think that we shall most effectively serve that high end by means of the contagious influence of the religious sentiment, that in relating the lives of men and women to God, whose morality is the source of ours, we shall make it more. It is this religious motive we need more vigorously to apply. And, to apply it, there is good reason why we should use a little more diligently the symbolism of religion, which, we must confess, we have fought shy of.

Is it not true that our congregations are to a considerable extent afraid of committing themselves to something definite, that they are afraid to bind themselves to anything except to run the finances of the church and keep the parish organization greased, so that it shall not creak too much? The other organization of the church, which was a part of our Congregational inheritance, if we still retain it, has a rather feeble life; or, if we have allowed it to lapse, have we enriched the parish organization so that it fills its place? How many of our churches have anything more than this business organization? How many of them have any form of receiving members to the relig-

ious fellowship for which the church exists? How many of us who are ministers have been afraid of committing our people to it? But people take upon themselves definite obligations elsewhere. They cannot form a copartnership without it, they cannot join a secret society without it, they cannot marry without it. It needs no creed, of which we have been justly jealous. It needs only a bond of union. If there is a better one than this, we should like to know it. "In the love of the truth and in the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man." I should like to see that stand as the preamble to all our parish organizations, and think our churches would be stronger and devouter if at regular intervals all who constitute them, the young as they come to maturity, would take upon themselves this bond and were publicly pledged to it.

We know, too, into what "innocuous desuetude" the service of the communion has sometimes fallen among us, and often we know the reason for it. It is a part of the same habit I have just been dwelling on. A certain superstition, shall I say, has clung to it from the old faith we have left behind. It seems to many to imply a holier-than-thou frame of mind, as if they set themselves up for saints, when they may not even be candidates for saints, only plain men and women who do their duty as well as they can. Besides, the way in which it is commonly observed makes it a private ordinance of the few. But why not have it a regular feature of the worship at less frequent times, the whole service of the day, and instil into the minds of our people that it is not the outward partaking of the bread that is important, but the partaking of the spirit of the service? I have had my experience with it in the old way and in this, and I am sure

that it is a means of religious impression I would not willingly resign. It does not matter whether Jesus left this as a perpetual memorial to all who love and reverence his memory. It is enough that it will help us to love and reverence him more deeply than we otherwise should. It is enough that on a few occasions in our Christian year we can bring him more closely and tenderly home to our hearts, and nourish in ourselves the feeling of religion to which I fear we do less than justice.

There is no reason to doubt that the great convictions in which we believe have come to stay. A thousand signs show that what our fathers labored and sacrificed for, that what we their children have helped to build, will surely enter into the thought and life of the coming time. For myself I love Unitarianism for its heritage of noble names, for its emphasis on the great realities of religion with which it has changed the climate of the world. Still standing in the forefront of reform, laying its ear to the past and hearing the harmonies beneath the dissonance, listening intently and reverently to what the Spirit of God still has to speak to the mind and heart of his children, I should like to see it doing its full and gracious work, blessing a thousand or ten thousand generations as it has our own. By all our gratitude and love for it, let us pledge ourselves anew to send it forth on its redeeming mission, and by all that is in us let us strive to make it more.

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ZEAL WITHOUT DOGMATISM

A Message to Unitarians

BY

Rev. CHARLES E. ST. JOHN

ERIES NINE
UMBER THREE

ZEAL WITHOUT DOGMATISM.

BY REV. CHARLES E. ST. JOHN.

The Unitarian philosophy is essentially one of appreciation. Every earnest soul in our fellowship aims to give a just appreciation to everything that is true, lovely, and of good report. Primarily, our mission is not that of drawing lines of cleavage between faith and faith. It is true that the exigencies of the evolution of the world's theology have compelled us to fight for our own conceptions of truth; but this has been simply a *modus operandi*, a phase of the spiritual activity of mankind. Moreover, it has not been empty of good results. Decry as we may the long-standing quarrels of the churches of conflicting creeds, we must not fail to recognize that it has been a most wholesome thing that people have laid such great stress upon what they believed. The wrangling has been a slight matter as compared with the power of uplifting that has subsisted in the abounding zeal; and, if the passing away of the period of controversy were to involve any slightest diminution of that religious zeal, it would mark a spiritual loss to the world and a deterioration of the individual soul. The vicissitudes of sectarianism have certainly shown that our several creeds are simply ways we have of expressing the deep things of our free and open minds; and, after the smoke of the battle of every great controversy has drifted away,

the discovery has always been made by the philosophic observer that both parties have been striving to express the same truths and life-giving convictions.

As we are a part of the self-reliant world, we have been entangled, willingly, in its struggles of the intellectual advance; but even through the times of our fiercest debates, external or internal, we have been conscious of an underlying and far-reaching ideal, the conception that our philosophy is that of seeing every good thing clearly, in whatever creed or action it may be embodied. Though, when strife is on, we wage a partisan warfare, partisanship is not our glory nor our essential spirit.

If I were to personify what I conceive to be the Unitarian philosophy of religion, I should claim that we are best represented by Sandalphon, the angel of glory, Sandalphon, the angel of prayer. We know nothing about Sandalphon except that he was deathless among the perishing angels, and that he was a spirit of appreciation. Let me recall Longfellow's picture of him,—

"There, erect, at the outermost gates
Of the city celestial he waits,
With his feet on the ladder of light,
That, crowded with angels unnumbered,
By Jacob was seen, as he slumbered
Alone in the desert at night.

"The Angels of Wind and of Fire
Chant only one hymn, and expire
With the song's irresistible stress;
But serene in the rapturous throng,
Unmoved by the rush of the song,
With eyes unimpassioned and slow,
Among the dead angels, the deathless
Sandalphon stands, listening, breathless,
To sounds that ascend from below

"From the spirits on earth that adore,
From the souls that entreat and implore
In the fervor and passion of prayer;
From the hearts that are broken with losses,
And weary with dragging the crosses
Too heavy for mortals to bear.

"And he gathers the prayer, as he stands,
And they change into flowers in his hands,
Into garlands of purple and red;
And beneath the great arch of the portal,
Through the streets of the City Immortal,
Is wafted the fragrance they shed."

An appreciation self-restrained so as to make no mistakes, and yet breathlessly attentive so as to miss nothing good; an attention so delicate and so just that it causes all the yearnings of humanity to discard their imperfections and localisms, and show in the eternal light their inner beauty and fragrance; an angel of glory and of prayer, a deathless power of comprehending the spiritual significance of each soul's imperfect, creedal articulation of the inner life,—such is the intellectual side of Unitarianism. And, if it ever seem to any "unimpassioned and slow," a juster glance will show them that this is because it is "listening breathless" to all the world's revelations of truth and life, and with fine self-abnegation recognizing the full glory of the human convictions which are contrary to its own.

So far as our Church is concerned, the age of dogmatism has passed. Yet we would not affirm this freedom of ours in a dogmatic manner; for, even in dogmatism, we strive to see the everlasting light, and of each and every dogma it is true that we would far rather understand it in all its essential glory than denounce it. We make all

the sincere convictions of the world the objects of our philosophic study, and, doing so, we find something great and lovely in them all. Therefore, I do not conceive it to be our mission to deliver the world from dogmatism. That exists because it is a serviceable thing, and its inevitable end will come when it ceases to serve any soul. We, who desire none of it for ourselves, will be wasting our breath if we challenge it; for our philosophy rather bids us find out what has been and is its secret of usefulness to the spiritual life. When we thus give it brotherly attention, we observe among its several glories the blood-red blossom of enthusiasm. Men are always zealous in the support of such of their convictions as have solidified into dogmas; and, inasmuch as religion without zeal is like science without a purpose, we shall find all forms of dogmatism deepening into loveliness and fragrance when we feel the throbbing of their earnestness.

If all the persons whose aversion to that which is dogmatic has made them indifferent to religion would intelligently employ the Unitarian philosophic method of observation, they would be deeply impressed by the fact that the majority of mankind have so clearly recognized the immense value of religious earnestness that, rather than lose it, they have submitted to each and every imposition of dogma, bidding the reason cease its clamors that seem to threaten the foundations of zeal. The truth is that zeal has rightly been recognized as the very life of religion, and whosoever supposes that zeal and dogmatism cannot be severed *ought* to silence his reason and stand by dogmatism. It is this fundamentally righteous purpose that keeps many of our day, who would naturally be progressive in their theology, in determined allegiance with the creeds, which, though unprogressive, are the

ancient guardians of an undiminishing zeal. From their premises they are quite right; and whosoever presents the claims of the reason in any way that seems antagonistic to that mighty purpose may as well chatter to the winds, for he cannot move human souls. From time immemorial the power for good possessed by any Church has been in proportion to its zeal, not in proportion to its truth; and no man can speak justly about the dogmas of the past until he understands how it is that they have so steadfastly fanned the flames of zeal. Moreover, no church that is founded on the living reason of its members rather than upon dogmas shaped of old can rise to its full usefulness until it has demonstrated that the reason is but a new and stouter guardian of good old Christian zeal.

The acceptance of religious zeal has been in very many cases a matter of contagion. Receiving it thus for the joy of its undeniable helpfulness, people have been content to take unchallenged with it the dogmas that may chance to be its shibboleth. But the world holds increasing numbers who for one cause or another are immune against this blessed contagion; and the mission of Unitarianism, which I have said lies not in its philosophy, its intellectual power of seeing the good in all things,— the mission of Unitarianism is towards these spiritual immunes. Without dogmatism we are to impart zeal. So far as the essence of the religious life is concerned, the intellectual freedom, the spirit of far-seeing appreciativeness, is but a new shibboleth,— one so noble and so dignified that the world longs to accept it, but cannot, because its deeper implications have not been made sufficiently clear. But the truth is that, when this spirit of brotherly appreciation, wherein Unitarianism is like unto

an angel of glory and prayer, is itself deeply understood, we invariably find that it, too, has the wondrous blossom and vitality of enthusiasm.

In truth, our philosophy, our breathlessness of appreciation of what is earnest in the world, is a spirit peculiarly calculated to arouse enthusiasm. I venture the assertion that no soul that has broadly and systematically grasped this Unitarian philosophy of religion has ever failed to be zealous in applying it to life; for it is a philosophy that makes sin ugly, selfishness abhorrent, and goodness the solid foundation of life eternal. For think what Unitarianism is on its intellectual side,— a continual vision of the fine human earnestness underlying all phases of thought, and of the infinite orderliness with which the thoughts of God have been wrought out in the processes of creation. Studying the most familiar facts of the physical world, we straightway come upon laws that lift us to a definite knowledge of God. Recognizing the inherent loveliness and perfectibility of human nature, we come upon something deeper about God, and learn something about man's relation to him. Reasoning from the little we see of God and the much we know about man, we discover the supremacy of the soul over the body and the earth, and so come in view of the everlasting life. Everywhere to our eyes the sublimity of order and the intimate particularity of perfect love, everywhere the evidence of the permanent vitality of righteousness and the subsidiary nature of imperfection and sin, everywhere the life of the spirit shining as the crown and glory of the experiences and conditions of the earth. Everything that we see and touch changes into flowers in our hands, and the fragrance thus distilled sweetens the life of the immortals. So, I repeat, no Uni-

tarian can adequately perceive the actual reach and significance of his philosophy of appreciation without becoming possessed from crown to foot with the spiritual uplift, the delight, the enthusiasm, of self-consecration to the service of so grand a faith.

It is a faith the intellectual grounds of which are not confined to the Bible or to any aspect of the life of Jesus Christ. Those unrivalled manifestations of God enter with all others into the range of our observation, and in them we see by the strength of our unforced intelligence the permanent good they express. Unquestionably, enough of inspiration is there to fill us with most holy zeal for religion; but this zeal can only increase when we perceive how many more grounds of faith we have in that we find spiritual implications in the generalizations of modern science, wonderful objects of conviction in all the laws of nature, in the multitudinous beauty and the wholesomeness of the universe, in the certainties of the moral law as the latest civilizations reveal them, in the stately march of evolution with all things known to us under God, and in the fascinating characteristics of finite and infinite personality with its sweeping power over all that is material. In the perception of all these living manifestations of truth, Unitarianism as a philosophy is free from every dogma, uncontrolled by any ancient and exclusive teaching, and at this moment "listening breathless" to the messages that are coming from below and from above. Nevertheless, on account of these very characteristics it is unreservedly and undividedly Christian. Dr. James Drummond demonstrates in his "Via, Veritas, Vita" that Christian churches are held together and Christian living maintained by a certain consecrated spirit or life-motive which

the world has learned from the Christ; and we have ever found that increasing freedom of the mind, if so be that the mind also gains in clearness and sympathy of perception of the patent facts of creation, serves most insistently to deepen and broaden this spirit of Christ which is man's ultimate ideal as a motive of conduct. Our philosophy is just appreciation of everything that is and has been and shall be: our mission is life in the spirit of Jesus Christ. And our mission grows out of our philosophy; as we find that all sincere human thinking and striving reveal in the alembic of fine appreciation this very Christian spirit, this splendid and unselfish earnestness as their motive and reason for existence. Every person who has seen and comprehended the great things of life believes in them; and every one who thus believes is a soul in earnest, a zealous spirit after the stamp that is called Christian.

Every Unitarian in the world who is not zealous for his faith is thus degenerate for one of two causes. Those fatal causes are ignorance and selfishness, and the observer cannot always tell which one of them is operating in a given case of religious indifference; for the hiding-places of ignorance in minds that are professedly cultured are subtle, and the secrets of selfishness are many and various. But let me say a word about both of these afflictions. Usually, I think, the cause is ignorance; and it is frankly confessed, so far as the victims are aware of it. We hear people saying that they do not know what they believe, that they are uncertain about the reality of God as a being who can be loved, that they are doubtful of the value of human existence, that they see no reason to believe in a life eternal. No person could talk that way who had really grasped the full meaning and glory

of the modern Christian faith, understood what we make to be the dignity and worth of human nature, the all-controlling nature of the divine presence in the world, the religious significance of every word of science, and the irresistible force of our reasons for foreseeing an eternal life. The indifferent have fallen short of the mighty scope of the faith. Understanding the dogmas of the world clearly enough to know that they cannot accept them, and so, perhaps, being philosophically Unitarian, they yet fail to understand the undogmatic religious position, with the consequence that they are not vitally Unitarian. If they understood these far-reaching convictions, they could not fail to believe them, and to be zealous for them. Never yet, when the full majesty and infinite reach of our faith possessed a well-meaning soul, did that soul fail to respond to its inspirations by personal earnestness and noble living. Between the holy vision of the divine unity of all things and the resultant perfectibility of all souls, and the individual loyalty of a passionately zealous life there stands no gap; for the one commands the other as its natural blooming and fruitage. No gap, unless — unless the second cause of religious indifference appears, deliberate choice of an evil and selfish use of time. Great is the benumbing power of temptation. "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." The person who dallies with his temptations and weaknesses instead of resolutely crowding them out of his mind by the fulness of his interest in the things of the spirit is one in whom self-reliance is bound to degenerate into self-indulgence. To please one's self in this present moment of desire is an easy path, and along it the noble things of life are not found. When one has

drifted into it, nothing will lift him out save his own moral resolution.

Such cases make it clear that there is always something more in religious zeal than simply an inspiration from the glory of the things we believe. There is a strong element of personal resolution in it. Just as we can command ourselves to be observant of the good in other people's beliefs, so we can resolve to be zealous when our judgment provides us good reasons for it; and many a soul, enlightened or otherwise, stops idly short of the full power of the Christian life for the mere lack of such a resolution as shall correlate his own activities with the glories which he sees around him or in history. This need of personal determination in the matter is one of the noblest characterizations of zeal. Earnestness cannot be simply absorbed from one's teachers and leaders, nor successfully put on at the command of an external authority, especially not in the case of any independent thinker. It has to be a voluntary thing, an inward quickening of the spiritual life. Until that inward and personal allegiance with the truth you see in the world has risen up in all its grandeur in your soul, you are not a full-grown Unitarian.

All this lays upon each one of our churches a responsibility not to be lightly met. It is only when pulpit and pew thrill with a responsive earnestness that our work is adequately done, and the one spiritual weakness which the churches must not condone in their ministers is a deficiency in zeal. If preachers can be scholarly, refined, genial, that is well; but they *must* be hopeful and zealous. If they are not this, they are dead weights on the necks of the churches; and in all the scope of the divine discipline of life there is no place where penal-

ties are surer than those which befall the church which weakly submits to a lack of earnestness in the pulpit. Such a church deserves to lose strength after strength, deserves its increasing feebleness of worship, deserves at last to lose its regimental number in the army of the Lord. A Christian church is an organization under orders to bestow life upon the community in which it is stationed, and it fails to do its duty if ever the voice from the pulpit "gives an uncertain sound." The gentle motives of pity or love for the man should not cause a church to forget that its mission is not to cherish one man, but rather to strive mightily for religion, and to insist that the man in the pulpit be one who can call out in his comrades the "mind to work."

If I am right in what I have been saying, it becomes very clear what should be the aim of all Unitarian preaching and church work. It should be, in the first place, appreciative rather than controversial, regarding all the dogmas of the diverse branches of the world's theological thinking and religious activity. In the second place, it should be carefully educative, so as to lead men to gain the broad perception of the glory of the universe of past, present, and future, of the wholesomeness and endlessness of the soul's nature, and of the solidity of all spiritual interests through the eternal God on whom they rest. And in the third place it should be morally inspiriting, throbbing constantly with the purpose and power of arousing in every soul that personal consecration which is man's only fit response to the all-pervading strength and beauty of the will of God. We are the guardians of a philosophy of appreciation, a work of education, and a mission of inspiration.

THE American Unitarian Association is the working missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It seeks to promote sympathy and united action among Liberal Christians, and to spread the principles which are believed by Unitarians to be essential to civil and religious liberty and progress and to the attainments of the spiritual life. To this end it supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes, sells, and gives away books, sermons, tracts, hymn-books, and devotional works.

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RATIONAL RELIGION
THE WANT OF THE WORLD

BY

Rev. JOSEPH MAY

SERIES NINE
NUMBER FOUR

Our Faith.

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
onward and upward forever.

Typical Covenant of a Unitarian Church.

In the love of the truth, and the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man.

Our Declaration

(*As expressed in the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association*).

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose."

(*As expressed by the National Conference of Unitarian and Other Christian Churches, at Saratoga, N. Y., in 1894.*)

"These Churches accept the religion of Jesus, holding, in accordance with his teaching, that practical religion is summed up in love to God and love to man.

"The Conference recognizes the fact that its constituency is Congregational in tradition and polity. Therefore, it declares that nothing in this Constitution is to be construed as an authoritative test; and we cordially invite to our working fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our spirit and our practical aims."

RATIONAL RELIGION — THE WANT OF THE WORLD.

BY REV. JOSEPH MAY.

"Other men labored, and ye have entered into their labors."— JOHN iv. 38.

IT is a law of human life that each generation, by the diligence and fulness of its works, should prepare the way, and help to make glad and fruitful the labors of its successors. That you and I should gather up the best that was in the lives and labors of our predecessors, and dedicate it, with all our own best powers and all our means of usefulness, to the one great cause of truth, of God's service as it presents itself to us to-day,— this is the sacred duty which the whole nature of human life imposes on us. Let it not seem a *burthen* laid upon our shoulders. Let it be to us our precious privilege,— the thing that gives meaning, dignity, and truest joy to our lives.

More and more clearly, as my own life matures, I see that the only true interpretation of life is that of Jesus,— as a *stewardship*, a career of co-operative labor with God himself; that all the force which is in man should be applied, as the infinite forces of Deity are wholly applied, to the evolution throughout the realm of being of the great truths which are eternal, by the realization of which in human character, human progress and the ultimate perfection of our natures are to be achieved. This is the

high, spiritual conception for which the Unitarian Church stands.

The question I would put to you to-day, with all the solemnity I can possibly give to it, is this, Do you appreciate, do you *justly* appreciate, the importance of our cause, the responsibility which rests on you and me to make and keep our Church, to the utmost of our power, the effective force for truth it is capable of being? If you do, then its future is secure, to be of fruitage rich and rewarding. There is no service you will not be prompt to render it, there is no sacrifice you will not be ready and eager to offer, to make and keep it vigorous, fresh, ever full of new life, effective and happy.

If you do *not* (and perhaps you do not fully) appreciate what an organization is, of which the meaning, aim, and possibilities are such as ours, then I earnestly entreat you give to it now renewed reflection; distinguish and freshly weigh its principles, observe the profound contrast they offer to those of every other branch of the Church. Weigh these things, I say, as honest, earnest men and women, consider them in the light of unselfish duty; and, if you are convinced, by such a survey, of the importance to the world of an organization based on the principles and standing for the truths which we recognize and proclaim, then I am sure you will make no grudging response to the call made upon your consciences.

For my own part, friends, I say, deliberately and earnestly, that I think there is *no* public responsibility appealing to you and me which compares in importance with that of our maintaining our church in vigorous life. There are other moral instrumentalities which call forcibly upon us: there are charities which tenderly affect our sympathies; and we ought, as we are able, to do our

duty by all. But whereas a great deal of the good work we are held to do is, in its nature, mundane, of temporary effect, to cure particular ills, to meet exigencies which are only passing, the work of *this* institution is radical, fundamental, essential. To relieve physical suffering; to improve outward conditions; to mitigate poverty; to promote health, education, art, morality,— all these things are of our duty, and are rewarding and delightful. But all the philanthropic work of the world, all the moral work of the world, its whole developing civilization, depend on *truth.* Only as the world gains *truth* — truth of thought, truth of aim, truth of spirit — does it, on any side whatever, progress to better things. The thoughts of men mould and inspire their actions. Their principles shape their lives. Make thoughts and principles elevated, unselfish, pure, noble, true, and human life will ascend to ever new forms of vigor and beauty and fruitfulness.

It is this function that every true church discharges. I do not say ours alone. Wherever men are sincere in their religious aims and efforts, true to their highest light, the cause of truth will be subserved. At least the *spirit* of truth must needs go forth from every heart that is, in aim and intention, true. But, certainly, our church is *peculiar* in the service it stands to render to society. Were all other churches dedicated to the same function, our responsibility might be less critical. Because we stand almost *alone* in the character of the work we do for truth, that responsibility is increased a hundred-fold. I think we ought to feel that, by God's providence, there is given to us, in our organized capacity, and as individuals who recognize the principles we undertake to promote, a function positively *sacred* in its quality. I do

not know what you could say of a man's office and aim higher than this,—that he was dedicated to the cause of RATIONAL RELIGION.

Rational religion! Surely, I do not need now to delay long in interpreting the phrase. Rational religion is simply religion conceived according to reason; attained by the use of our reason, in which the mind of God is reflected in the mind of man; amenable to reason — that is subject, finally, to no authority but the mind and conscience of each individual, acting freely, because only when acting in perfect freedom can any of the conclusions of our minds be just and true. Rational religion is, therefore, religion free, personal, positive, practical, the testimony of our faith, the natural product of all our best intuitions, experiences, observations, reflections, studies. It uses every help which consideration of the thoughts of others, the study of human history and of every science, may furnish it. It reverently appropriates whatever it finds true, wherever it finds it. But it rejects the claim of any pretended authority, of church, council, book, creed, to *override* the sincere convictions of the private mind. The only revelation of truth is the divine impression which it makes on each private heart. Perfect freedom of mental action is its necessary condition. The condition of your attaining more truth than to-day you have is your mental and moral fidelity to what you, this day, see and feel to be true. It is a wrong to any mind that any other should attempt to impose on it conclusions to which it does not itself arrive by the normal, sincere, thoughtful use of its own powers, of the experiences it has had, the observations and reflections it faithfully makes. *Only* in this way can one's mind genuinely progress in the knowledge of truth. The least

faint, feeble, wavering impression of truth, which comes to you normally, genuinely, may be the beginning of a whole volume of spiritual revelation, awakening, reviving, upbuilding, your spiritual life. Be true to it, cultivate the springing germ of faith and insight, follow the lead of the flickering ray which shines into your heart, accept the *spirit* of truth, and give it way in your heart; and, as Jesus promised his hearers, it shall surely lead you into all truth.

This is the *method* of rational religion. "Reason in religion," says a recent inspiring writer, "does not mean reasoning about religion," although that we do, "but reason so permeating religion that nothing untrue can be held sacred, nothing brutal can be called divine, nothing unworthy of reverence can be worshipped. Reason in religion means the consecration of the whole *mind*, as well as the whole heart, to the cause of God and man."

Now the established method of religious culture, as practised in the whole body of the Christian Church, is, in its principles, *exactly opposed* to all this. It sets out with the *denial* of the right and duty of the private mind thus freely, individually, normally, and truly, to proceed in the attainment of religious truth. Its foundation postulate is that all truth has been given to man, in express outward statement, and is to be accepted in that form, as the Church prescribes it. It declares the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures (irrespectively of the obviously varying value, and often discordant quality, of their contents) to be, in literal form, the comprehensive summary of religious truth, verbally revealed by God, and superior to human scrutiny and criticism. It offers you a compendium of essential truth in its creeds. It insists on the acceptance of those creeds, whether or no their con-

tents appeal to your judgment and conscience. It thus *enchains* the mind at the outset. It *denies it* the free action which is the only true mental action. It *interposes itself* between the mind and truth, between the soul and God. It does not merely assist, as each of us may do, and should, the other: it asserts a title to *control*. Even were its conclusions sound, this method of religious culture would still be false and wrong. Vital religion can only be attained by normal, vital processes. The truth of God himself which shall be imposed on the mind by authority (*i.e.*, by compulsion), can only be formal, not vital. It is not the result of *genuine* processes of thought and feeling. It cannot do the work of vital truth in the soul.

There is much sincere and beautiful religion, no doubt, in the hearts of men and women about us. But, mark you, *it is not the result of the acceptance of authoritative teaching*. It is in defiance of that teaching. It is outside of all compulsory culture. It is the sweet result of the natural activities of the mind and spirit, which cannot — in these days, certainly — be wholly restrained. But these natural activities may be sadly *interfered* with, repressed, and distorted. And, worst of all, the method of authority tempts the private mind to rest in a mere formal acquiescence in the modes of thought enforced upon it. Distrusting itself, encouraged to suppose that all truth has been attained and is formulated in the creeds, it sinks into an apathetic acquiescence in the things taught it, and is discouraged from the vital, active, genuine effort to attain truth,— truth, not of opinion merely, but truth of spirit, truth of aim and endeavor, out of which alone real spiritual life can be developed.

This is the actual condition of the religious world about us,—of the world of good and earnest people, who are willing to be religious, who are religious in spirit, but on whom church discipline, the authority of creed and dogma, hang as a heavy millstone to hinder them in the genuine development of their spiritual natures. We cannot, surely, undervalue the injurious results of the popular methods of religious culture in this respect. A thousand obvious evils flow from it. Religion is made a *formal* thing, to which it is enough to render outward assent. So it loses the vital power which the appeal of true religion — religion personal, rational, natural — would exert. The religious life remains itself formal, superficial, wanting in inspiration, in moral power, in the awakening, energizing force, of which true religion is the fountain.

We see this in the moral condition of Christian peoples. It is certain that their religion does not enter practically into life. If it did, how, then, could all the evils of life remain so flagrant? Grant all the power of self, sense, worldliness, passion, all the effects of indifference, spiritual ignorance, and deadness of heart, yet, if all the *seeming* religion of the world were *real* religion, if all the professors of religion were animated, alive, eager, with the spirit of religion working positively, freely, practically in their hearts, I declare that the evils of life must wonderfully yield to the pressure of truth, of faith, of holy purpose, which *could not but* issue from the presence of free, rational, individual religious conviction and feeling in the millions of hearts which now formally profess it, but which, through the evil effects of a vicious method of religious culture, have been withheld from the development of a true religious life.

We see a like result in the *apathy* of the masses towards religious truth. Hidden from them, debarred from them, by the method of authority in religion; they, offended by the absurdities of what is proffered them as religious truth, dissuaded from that personal quest of truth to which we are all called in nature, turn their backs altogether upon religion, and drift into pure neglect of the most important interest, the only real interest, of the human career.

We see a similar result of false religious culture in the *unrest* of myriad souls, who crave to be religious, but cannot accept what is offered to them as religion; in the dubious position which so many of the popular religious leaders visibly occupy, who have really outgrown their own creeds, yet are so crippled in the action of their minds so hampered by selfish considerations,— the dread of unpopularity, the fear of censure, and of worldly inconvenience,— that they are true neither to what they profess of the popular creeds, nor to the genuine instincts of their own souls, calling them to independence, to the rejection of dogmas they no longer truly believe, to the proclamation of the religion which is true, because the reflection of the actual workings of their minds.

There are such men all about us in the very pulpits of the churches; men liberal in spirit; who have caught some gleam of the real truth; who cannot wholly blind themselves to the results of scholarship and science; who really feel the unsoundness of their positions; who long for spiritual freedom, long to throw off the shackles of creeds and church discipline, but are not strong enough; have not the courage to meet opposition and worldly loss; are not quite clear enough in these deeper convictions to enable them to come out, rejecting their

false positions, and becoming the leaders of the people in a purified thought, in a free, rational, and fruitful religious life.

If we Unitarians are thoughtful, if we are sincere, if we are earnest, we cannot be indifferent to the religious phenomena of the present hour.

Never was the work of an organization like the Unitarian Church, based upon the positive recognition of the vital reality of religious truth, the recognition of God, of the spiritual nature of human life, but presenting to the private soul only the call of the spiritual nature for personal self-culture more important; never was the demand of any hour more exigent,— and, let me add, more encouraging and hopeful,— for the presentation of RATIONAL RELIGION, religion perfectly free, the normal product of individual conviction, vital, and therefore forever progressive in the paths of God's spiritual leading.

I say, then, again, no work could possibly be, at this time, more precious, more beneficial to the world, more rewarding to its willing servant. As things actually are, none is equally or comparably pressing upon you and me. It is our peculiar service: it is our supreme responsibility. It is comprehensive of all good work. To set free the minds and hearts of our generation; to open to them the glad liberty of the sons of God; to make them see the beauty of true religion; to infuse into our time the true spirit of religion,— ah! nothing you can possibly do in any other channel can be so important, so rewarding as this.

Every church has two functions: one,— sweetest, doubtless, to our private hearts,— to minister by its services, by the faith of each strengthening the faith of all, and all of each, to the spiritual life of its own people. Remember

that the responsibility for even *this* rests, above all, upon the people. The minister can do but a part of it. The faith you bring to your church; the diligence you are willing to give to enhance the common spiritual life; even the regularity of your outward presence on the occasions of meeting for worship and reflection, — these are the prime conditions of the life, the joy, the utility, of a church.

But each church has also the *other* function, of promoting the spread of truth in the world. According to its relation to the public mind is the *emphasis* of either function relative to the other. Most obviously, then, is that second function commandingly important and pressing. It ought to command your utterly unreserved, unresting self-consecration. You ought to be willing for every generous service you can render to such a cause, for every sacrifice it can possibly call you to.

In a succinct statement, what you want to see and acknowledge is exactly this: An *organization based upon our principles, standing for the truth we see, and in presence of the actual religious condition by which we are confronted, is essentially a missionary enterprise. In any part of our country to-day — and so it long will be — a Unitarian church is a missionary church.* Its work is a missionary work. It cannot — certainly, it cannot usually — be sustained on the principles of a business enterprise, of which you limit the range according to its cost and profits. It is like every generous agency for reform, in morals, politics, social life, which those who feel the importance of some great truth sustain at all cost to themselves, to promote that truth. Effectively, — in spirit, if not in mere business methods, — a true Unitarian church is a *free* church, because it exists to *give* truth to those

whom it can reach. The condition of its life and action is not in the response of the community to its offered service: this may come slowly and sparsely. Its life, its strength, its effectiveness, are in the devotion of its members to the unselfish work of offering its truth to every willing heart as freely and largely as it is in their power to do.

This privilege and duty is placed upon us by Providence; by the spirit of truth which has worked, through God's grace, in our own minds; which has set them free, which reveals to us the true conditions of spiritual culture, in which the religious world is so far astray,— in a word, which has placed precious truth in our hands, which we rejoice in for ourselves, and which it is for us to say whether we will generously give to the world or will niggardly withhold. "Other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors." We may accept our responsibility, and be blessed. We may decline it, or halt in it, and make our account with God. But the men and women on whom his light has shined; who recognize the truth that religion is the supreme, pervasive interest of human life; who recognize, secondly, that religion is only true, vital, of full efficient power, when it is free, when it is rational, when it is positive and personal; who see that the popular religious cultus of to-day is a burthen, heavy to be borne, still resting, like an incubus, on the spiritual life of our generation,— these men and women are called of God, as truly as were Jesus and his twelve apostles, to *give* true religion to the world.

The professional ministers of religion may do much, indeed. God grant them all a perfect zeal in all their work. Give us, O God, who are selected for the high office of uttering thy truth, of leading thy people in the way of truth,

all faith, all earnestness, the spirit of consecration, the spirit of sacrifice, that not on us shall rest the shame of infidelity to our holy stewardship! But may God grant also to our *people* everywhere the vision, the responsive ardor, the willingness to do, to spend and be spent, in the same common service of his cause!

Are you and I, dear friends, worthy of our spiritual progenitors? Are we willing to take newly up their work of service? Are we willing to bear the cross which our present apostolate lays upon us? Ah! a light and easy cross it is, compared to that which myriads of true hearts have gladly borne for God's truth!

Scrutinize your hearts, I entreat you, this day! Consider your heritage,— your heritage of truth, your heritage of responsibility. Consider what talents God has placed in your keeping. What power of thought have you? What power of faithful speech? What power of worldly wealth, potent for every practical cause, has the bountiful Giver of every good gift placed in your hands? Are you willing to use those talents for God's cause? Will you use them for his cause? Or will you bury them in the earth,— in the soil of self-regarding lives,— wrapt in the napkin of self-indulgence, of worldly ease, of spiritual apathy?

Ah! dear friends, I will not distrust your answer, if of your hearts you faithfully inquire.

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Tracts descriptive of Unitarian principles, doctrines, and methods, are sent free to any who desire to know what Liberal Christianity stands for and works for. A list of these free tracts will be sent on application. A full descriptive catalogue of the publications of the Association, including doctrinal, devotional, and practical works, will be sent to all who apply. All religious books by Unitarian authors are kept on sale, and will be sent on receipt of price. A list of such books, with prices, will be furnished upon request.

The Association is supported by the voluntary contributions of churches and individuals. Annual subscriptions of any amount are solicited. Address communications and contributions to the Secretary at his office, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The following is the simple

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath to the American Unitarian Association, a corporation established by law in the State of Massachusetts, the sum of.....dollars.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

BY

Rev. AUSTIN S. GARVER

SERIES NINE
NUMBER FIVE

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

BY REV. AUSTIN S. GARVER.

I WISH to emphasize the dignity and importance of church membership in our Unitarian churches. Let me, by way of illustration, refer to the experience and recent action of our own church, the Second Parish, in Worcester.

We are an old church, and inherit our organization from the last century. Like most of the older churches, we have the double organization: on the one hand, the *parish*, which owns the property, and has charge of the whole administration of the affairs of the body. Then, formally distinct from the parish, is the *church*, which represents the purely religious purposes of the whole institution.

Our history has been like that of many other churches. For reasons that might be indicated the organization of our religious life received less and less attention during the last fifty years. The *life itself* was there, perhaps never so strong and clear. But the church, with certain uncongenial associations and an outgrown covenant, had ceased to be its faithful and adequate expression. Its membership was small, the people were not drawn to it, and it gradually became the ghost rather than the embodiment of our deeper sentiments.

A condition like this, in which our central aims were the object of such neglect and dishonor, was satisfying to none of us. And, when we began seriously to consider what ought to be done, a marvellous thing happened.

The whole congregation were deeply interested, and they were all of one mind. To their great credit, they saw what it was we needed to do; and they did it in the simplest way. They did not say that our difficulty lay in the old double organization that we had inherited from the past. They did not think it worth while to tinker the mere machinery. Neither did they feel that what we needed was externalism of any kind, either of ecclesiastical apparatus or of ecclesiastical performance. They found no fault with the mere form of the organization. They said simply: "Let us make our present organization express our present spirit. Let the church be the one united expression of what we as individuals mean by attending its services. Let it stand for the moral ideals of the good life, and for nothing else."

They, therefore, adopted as their bond of union the familiar words, "In the love of truth and in the spirit of Jesus, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man."

That is all that has been done, and it is sufficient. As a result, the church is again the synonyme of our best life. It comprises simply and easily all sincere and serious persons. It lays upon them no obligation except the moral one. Our better purposes are raised to a position of dignity and honor. They are placed conspicuously in front, where they belong, like the flag which we are glad to follow. The banner appeals to the patriotism of the spirit, and to give allegiance both to what it means and what it claims satisfies one of the deepest demands of the spiritual nature. Such has been our experience; and more than one hundred and twenty persons, old and young, men and women, have found satisfaction and strength and joy in publicly owning the sovereign

principles of the good life. And the end is not yet. Best of all is the feeling, not that something has been done and finished, but that a new era in our personal and collective life has begun.

Now tendencies and sentiments such as are illustrated in this particular instance are wide-spread among us. They are what we should expect, even if there were no clear evidence to indicate their presence.

We should expect that our history and our experience as a denomination would begin to tell, and to unfold their deeper meanings. The newness and strangeness of our position are wearing away. Our vision is becoming clearer. We are coming to a serener consciousness, not only of what we are not ecclesiastically, but of what we are. The old conceptions of Bible and church, which we have no use for, do not disturb our dreams as they once did. Time was when we were haunted by rational objections. We could not escape their atmosphere. Men saw that the church did not stand for the good life, either in intellect or character. Its requirements were unreal, its goodness fictitious. It drew a line that did not exist in fact. They saw that there were just as good people outside as inside, and they concluded that they did not need the church. They had every reason that should prevail with right-minded people for standing aloof. The very name of the church carried associations that were repugnant to them,— of truth which was but speculation, of profession which was but etiquette, and of sanctities which did not sanctify.

The inference was but natural that an institution whose claims had been invalidated was a thing of the past. But we all are in a position now to see — the better, perhaps, because we have had our part in the revolt — that

there is a better inference. The old is gone: let it go. But the spirit that created that which was once glorious is still present, and able to create something more glorious. The church remains: its pretensions only have passed away. The deep things of religion — the sense of God, the majestic conceptions and dreams of the mind, the athletic impulses of the moral nature — were never more strong. The need of an institution that stands for what is best, reminds us of our nobler possibilities, and disturbs us with a sense of something vast and solemn over us, was never more deeply felt. We have lived through the period of objection, and are coming to an unmitigated appreciation of the value of the church.

Society is not, perhaps, worse than it has been; but it is peculiarly exposed to the moral dangers that come in the flattering disguise of liberty and progress. There is little self-restraint and much self-assertion, little regard for things venerable and much abandonment to unchecked impulse. In the clamorous and unspiritual individualism of the time there is but one institution whose function it is to proclaim the Golden Rule and the law of love, but one clear voice to tell without cessation what the beatitudes of life are.

Not only is it needed, but, notwithstanding its weakness, the church has shown its power. Go into any of our communities, and, if you want to know in what estimation the church is held, propose that its doors should be closed and its prayers silenced. Your proposition would meet with an instant and universal protest. People would not speak of its weakness,— however few its numbers or meagre its resources,— but of the mighty influence it has exerted in the community. It has nurtured brave and beautiful character, it has ele-

vated the tone of thought and the standard of duty. Its ideals have been felt in every home and store, and its benediction has followed the youth on leaving his native village for the wider world. To close it would be nothing less than a public calamity. It is the one institution which we could least afford to do without.

Clearer and deeper grows the conviction that we have here an agency for promoting the higher life that is of incalculable importance. We see what the church means. We do not look to it to teach us what to believe. We do not regard it as an ark of safety. We care nothing for its traditional and artificial claims, nor do we value it as the guardian of forms and sacraments. The way is clear for the simple, central conception of its supreme worth. The time is come for the plain, emphatic acknowledgment of that conception. It represents a type of life — illustrated for us in the Gospels — which we would own for ourselves and seek to promote among men.

The question that arises is, Are we making the most of it? It does not seem to me that the real question is whether we belong to it or not. In the real sense, we do belong to it. These are our best personal ideals that it represents. They have our allegiance. How can we magnify them, give them honor, and make them powerful? Our problem is not how to create a membership that does not now exist, but how to utilize for our work the natural membership which we have.

I ask you to think of the force now represented in our churches. What clear conviction, what strength of character, what earnestness of purpose, what depth and health of religious feeling, and what unmeasured spiritual energy ready to be used! Where will you find grander

material for the work of the church in which we all believe? Where will you find a heartier comradeship in its aims and high purposes? A braver, more compact, more homogeneous body of Christians does not exist. We are in perfect intellectual and moral agreement. Where should our cause be strong and prosperous, if not here? It is prodigal wastefulness to let the great forces we have spend themselves in vain for lack of control and direction. Let us save them by turning them into the channels of our activity.

We need but one thing. We have the right kind of people. Our aims are clear, and we are united in them. Now let us come closer together in our devotion to the ideals of the good life, and thus gain the strength and enthusiasm which such a comradeship will give. We are sustained by each other. We are strong in our collective strength. With the power that comes only from concentration, with the individual church a unit in itself, with the group of churches forming a larger unit, with the common feeling that we are a body moving and working with one mind and one heart, there is nothing within the range of possibility that we cannot do.

If this is what we mean by church membership, there is nothing more worthy of our consideration, nothing so much needed to cure the defect and weakness of our present condition. I am sure that we can secure the benefit of this closer organization without falling into the perils of ecclesiasticism and without losing any of the precious fruit of our freedom. All that is needed is perfect candor and simplicity in the measures taken.

Let us make plain beyond the possibility of mistake just what we mean by belonging to the church. Let there be no suggestion of theology or observance. Make

no appeal to the selfish motive of benefit, but to the Christian motive of service. Present the claims of the church, so that men will say: These are *my* great interests. These are the things I am trying to live for. What can I do for them? This is the high call that our young people need to hear and are waiting to hear. They want to be of use. They possess the generous, the heroic impulses. And when they respond, as they will, to the call, bringing themselves, their best gift, give them the opportunity to seal their allegiance by the definite act of uniting with the church. Such a step is needed to deepen and focus their religious aspirations. It will make them feel that they belong to a great company and fellowship, and already have a share in the hopes and struggles and triumphs of all noble souls. It will satisfy one of the deepest demands of their spiritual nature, and will lend dignity and significance to their young lives.

I would say to all, The church means just what you mean in your better sentiments both for yourself and for society. Identify yourself with it, not for your own sake primarily, but for those whom you can help. Come, not in order to be better,— still less in order to profess to be better,— but to enlist like a soldier. Give yourself just as you are. Your clear intellect, your working morality and deep convictions, are what are most of all needed to make the church the power it might be.

If we are wise enough to keep the emphasis on what is essential, men will be glad to stand together for the principles of the good life. "In the love of truth and in the spirit of Jesus" draws us all, and is the sufficient bond. And with such a union would come new courage and hope, a fresh sense of the greatness of our work, and a better appreciation of the relation of our Unitarian

churches to the life of the time. We speak of the missionary spirit; but the warmth, the enthusiasm, the devotion, which that phrase denotes, will never be shown in our general cause unless these fires have first been kindled on the hearth of the individual church. The sense of belonging to something great and glorious enough to claim us altogether must begin there.

I believe that we are on the threshold of a new era in our religious history. We are ready to appreciate our position, our opportunity, our privilege, and our obligation as never before. The time is surely coming when the tendencies that have been slowly unfolding for three generations will become plain, and we shall witness new births of spiritual power. Let us collect our forces, and close our ranks, and go forth to meet the day. Let us lift our standard on high, and gather around it in a firmer loyalty. We need nothing more. We have but to recognize and utilize the forces we now have, to fill our churches with the consciousness of the strength which they possess, and to give our Unitarian body the courage and the ability to fulfil its great mission to the world.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE WORCESTER CONFERENCE OF UNITARIAN SOCIETIES, 1899.

Adopted at a Meeting whereat the foregoing Address was delivered.

We would commend to the serious consideration of our churches the advantages of a better organization of our church life. To this end we earnestly recommend: —

First, That each and every one of our churches shall give honor and dignity to its statement of religious spirit and purpose, shall make its statement simple, clear, and strong, and, having its membership involve no test of creed or sacrament, shall make it an expression of purpose and a pledge of loyalty. The familiar form, "In the love of truth, and in the spirit of Jesus, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man," is in use in more than eighty of our churches, and is perhaps as good as any.

Second, That this or some similar, simple statement be adopted by each church, or incorporated in the articles of organization of the society or parish; and that all persons in the parish be invited and urged to subscribe to the same, and thereby become members of the church.

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BUSINESS ENTERPRISE IN RELIGION

BY

Rev. BROOKE HERFORD, D.D.

ERIES NINE
NUMBER SIX

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE IN RELIGION.

BY REV. BROOKE HERFORD, D.D.

I HAVE always counted it one of the blessings of my life that I was brought up to business. I only had four years of it, as office-boy and clerk. I never went far enough in business to get to its emoluments, but I went far enough to get something of its drill and discipline. I was in it long enough to learn a great respect for business ways, and especially for business enterprise.

In one way this introduction to business life and ways has made me very sympathetic, but in another I am afraid it has made me very critical. It has given me an interest in all this busy city life, an appreciation of its sturdy activity, a sympathy for its difficulties, that I else could hardly have felt. But at the same time it makes me constantly dissatisfied with the unbusiness-like slackness with which much of our religious work is carried on. I cannot help comparing the way in which men carry on their business with the way in which the same people carry on their churches, the enterprise which they put into trade with the slack and feeble hold they take of religion.

There are many applications of this subject. For one thing it applies to the interest men take in religion itself, in its great convictions and thought, apart from their embodiment in religious institutions. I think I speak the feeling of all ministers, when I say that what we long for

most of all is to have the men among our people stand with us a little more definitely and heartily in this great interest of religion. We do not want fewer of the women, but we want more of the men! I do not mean that men are entirely indifferent on the subject. But still — to see the contrast! How many, who in all the doings of the world have so keen an appreciation of firmness and thoroughness, are in these higher elements of life so often hesitating and half-hearted! People who in business take care to see clearly what they are at, and who strike straight for the mark and make a clean stroke every time,— how often do you find them, not only in the most misty and undecided state about religion, but content to remain so, shrinking from taking any decided step on the Christian side, and, in fact, dealing with all that higher side of life with a feeble hesitation, which, if any man showed to them in business, they would cross him right out of their books.

We are all familiar with this as it shows itself in our orthodox friends. Here is your neighbor, for instance, a shrewd, practical man, who from Monday morning till Saturday night goes right to the point, and will not touch a business matter that he does not squarely believe in. But Sunday comes, and all this is changed. He goes to some church where the whole scheme of divine and eternal things is laid down as rigidly as if they had a township plat of them. Does he really take in all those old doctrines of total depravity and an angry God, a ruined world and a yawning hell? Does he believe the Bible to be absolutely divine all through,— Solomon's song and David's curses and all? Nothing of the kind. When you get into a quiet talk with him, he will frankly tell you that there is a great deal that he no more believes

than you do; and, in fact, you find that he thinks very much as you think. And yet suppose you press him to come right out, and stand squarely with you for these more reasonable beliefs, why, he draws in directly. "Ah, well," he says, "it is a difficult subject. There are some things that he does not see clearly. He does not know that he is quite prepared to commit himself." And you know very well that he never will be.

But it is not only our orthodox friends to whom this applies. While they are hesitating in avowing what they do not believe, what *we* want is a little clearer grasp of what we do believe, and a little more enterprise in working for it. With too many on the liberal side, liberalism is only a sort of vague impression; and, when it is only this, it is very apt to drift into a vague impression that everything is uncertain, and that there is not anything sure enough to believe in or work for very earnestly. But that is not so really. The main lines of religious truth are not doubtful. God, duty, immortality, and Christ as the greatest teacher of these great verities,— *these* are not really doubtful. These things have been questioned and investigated in the present day as never before, and they have stood the test; and those who watch the drift of the higher thought of science and philosophy know that these things stand to-day realities and certainties more than ever before. There wants a clearer hold of these things. With many there wants enough of thought and study of them to have a chance of getting a clear hold. We want a firmer, more open standing for them, a franker stepping forward in the line in which these things ask our worship and work. That is where we ministers feel the pinch. We have in our churches many of the strongest, truest-hearted business men of the community.

They are the men who, if they join a corporation, send its shares right up. They are the men who, if they take hold in an institution, mean to *make it go*, and do make it go. They are the men who, if they belong to a party, can quietly join hands with other strong men of the same sort, and put right through whatever they make up their minds about. They go quietly to them, and say, "See here: we must do this thing." And they do it. I believe we have a larger proportion of this sort of men in our churches than there are in almost any others. Why, if they would stand with us for religion as they do in business and public life and other things, there is nothing we could not do. But there is where the trouble comes in. Of these very same men, there are so few who will stand squarely with us on the religious side of our work, and take hold with us as if they really meant it!

I fancy some may be inclined to say that I ought not to be hard on such people, because, though they may hold back from standing openly with us on the religious side of our work, they are ready to stand with us and do their part for our churches and our church work as institutions. But I am afraid that plea will hardly bear looking into.

And why is this? Is it your fault? you ask; and perhaps you feel it a little hard to be reproached for a state of things which most men dislike as much as I do. But, then, would it ever have been so if you men had taken hold of the church like business men, who believe in the thing and mean to make it go? No! You pay your pew-tax, and then expect to have done with it; and, if the women ask you for more, you begin to say, "Come, this thing is getting too expensive." And so the women have first to devise the ways of doing such little Chris-

tian works as they can do, and then have to devise the means of paying for them. Do I blame them that our churches are what they are? Not I! My wonder is that the churches are still so good, for they are good. Take them with all their imperfections, the churches are still the noblest institutions in society to-day. They do represent Christ, partially at least. They represent him in his "going about doing good," they represent him in his drawing the little children to him, they represent him in many of the details of his ministry. But they want also to represent him in the great, strong purpose of his life,— the proclaiming of the true religion to mankind, and helping by it to change the world into the kingdom of God. Our churches might do this. They have all the vantage-ground for doing it. It is only manpower that they want. Already, in any dozen cities, our Unitarian churches include the body of strongest, stanchest men in all the city. But in what church do these strong men ever assemble together to consider squarely, How can we make our church do better the real work of a church of Christ in the world? It simply never seems to occur to them to look at it that way. They go on year after year much in the old way. They beautify the church, or get a new organ, or have a course of lectures, or anything that the minister likes to push. But if the church is pretty well filled, and paying its way, they do not see why he wants to fuss about anything more, and wish that he would be contented with having things go comfortably and well.

I have spoken of the need of more business enterprise in conducting our churches themselves. I want also to speak of it in relation to the larger work which our churches should be doing together. Take the American

Unitarian Association. I should especially like to do anything I can to strengthen the position of that Association with our churches. I have watched its course, I have seen its broad, practical policy, I have seen how wisely and carefully it has made every dollar do the work of three by careful management and encouraging local self-help; and now I have come to the conclusion that it is time our people and our churches took hold of it in quite a different way from anything they have done yet.

Think how the Association is supported at present. By a few churches, heartily and gladly, as the thing for which they most willingly do their part. But with how many is it so?

Why, you know pretty well the sort of thing that goes on after one of the Secretary's circulars has come to the average church. The minister feels his heart sink. We know he *ought* to press his people to respond; but he hates to speak about money to them, for they are always "talking poor," and he knows that they have been thinking that the church wearing-apparatus will hardly last the winter. However, he goes to his leading trustee,— a pushing, successful manufacturer, noted for making everything he touches succeed,— calls him Mr. Midas, and shows him the letter.

"Why," says Mr. Midas, "seems to me it's only about last month that we took up that collection."

The minister says: "No! It is almost a year."

"Well, anyhow," says the layman, "I don't see what those Boston folks want to be asking money of us away here. Haven't they money enough to do their own work, I'd like to know?"

The minister pleads that it is not a Boston work at all, that it is for all over the country; and he puts in a word

for all doing their part to help in this large missionary work.

"Oh, that's all very well," is the reply; "but I believe in charity beginning at home."

The poor minister is at his wits' end. He had thought last May, when he was at the anniversaries, that he could persuade his people to increase their contribution; and now all he can do is to say in a rather hesitating way: "Well, I guess we *must* do something. It won't do to let our membership of the Association lapse. Come, Mr. Midas," he adds, "it makes me feel cheap not to have our church help with the rest. So you take it up, and then the rest will be willing."

"Oh, yes, they'd be willing for me to pay it all myself, I dare say; but I can't do it. Why, I am building that new mill, and I've had to give ever so much to help build that Episcopal church, because the clergyman is my wife's cousin; and now they have just come on me for another two hundred toward election expenses. However, I suppose we must do it. Let me see, how much is it I give?"

The minister tells him "$20," to which he replies: "Well, I suppose I shall have to do it again. I guess that won't break me."

No! I guess it won't break him!

Now that is no exaggeration. That is just the kind of conversation that lies behind dozens of the contributions to the Association. There is hardly one of those smaller churches from which they come that has not among its members at least two or three each of whom could give the whole contribution, and hardly know it.

But why is it that these friends feel about it and talk about it in this way? Merely because they have never

taken it in that this is a great business enterprise, to be done like any other business and made a success of, and that it is *their* business, too!

I sometimes think that many Unitarians look upon all this effort to make our religious views better known and build up new churches as a sort of harmless *extra* which we ministers go in for, from a sort of restlessness. They don't care for it; but, as *we* do, they let us have our way so long as it doesn't amount to much. When they are good-humored and friendly about it, it is about in the spirit of the "navvy" who let his little wife beat him. "It pleases her," he said, "and it doesn't hurt me"; and a man gives his $10 or $20 with quite a pleasant air. But, when things are pressing, then he grumbles; and that is the reason that so many churches only send in just at the last, or many do not send at all.

That is the real trouble; and until this can be altered, until business men can see that this is their enterprise as well as ours, quite as much as ours, it is of little use appealing for more liberality. When they *do* feel that it is their business, then they will take it up and do it *as they do their other business*,— not just a little more liberally, but on quite a different scale.

This is not a factitious need, got up or exaggerated by the restlessness of a few ministerial enthusiasts. It is the real need of a new generation growing up throughout the country, upon whom the old thoughts of religion are more or less losing their hold, and many of whom are already feeling out for something better. What has God given us something better for? Just to keep it inside these comfortable old churches of ours, and have a good time with it? We face the need of a whole new world growing up from the ground,— the America that

is to be. Is it only the concern of a few restless sectarians what that new world is to be? It is the business of any man in America to do his part. I have been out through Kansas and Colorado, down into New Mexico. It was only ten years since I was there before, and everything is utterly changed. The new watering stations across that great desert, which then struck me with more awe than anything I ever saw in the world, are now thriving villages, many of them considerable towns. I walked about in Denver, Pueblo, Trinidad, the little straggling towns I knew,— so utterly overgrown that I literally could not, in any one of them, find a single place that I could recognize, and, finally, I came to a place in New Mexico where ten years since I called at a little log house standing miles away from any other; and now there are twenty-five hundred people there, and newspapers and banks, and the county round, which ten years ago was declared forever useless except for the scattered herd of cattle, is filling up with small farmers, who are finding that the land will grow oats five feet high and fruit as good as any in California. Over all that new world the Methodists are building about a new church every day in the year. Do I grudge it them? Not I. It is good, honest work they do, and as little sectarian as any work in the world. I preached in one of their churches, and got a cordial welcome; and I respect their work. But still it is not quite our work, and there is room for ours as well,— not room for it only, but need, urgent need for it; and I came home feeling like preaching a new crusade to find — what? The old story,— the American Unitarian Association, which should be able to take up the work, crippled for lack of funds, the Secretary asking whether our churches can possibly manage to

raise a third more, and the churches not quite sure whether the whole thing is not a nuisance.

Yes, of course it is a nuisance, if it is the enterprise of a few fussy ministers. But, if it is indeed part of the real business of our churches, part of the very business that they are here for, then it is something that should be done — that is what I keep pleading for — with the same enterprise which is put into your other business.

When you business men have got a "really good thing," you like to push it for all that it is worth. Now we have a good thing here. I know this simple, common-sense faith of ours is a good thing. I know it, not just because it is our thought, but because all the real thought of men to-day is, I don't say coming over to us, but tending toward the same great beliefs for which we have so long had to stand alone. It is not that the other churches are in any way doing our work, but that they are making us doubly sure that the lines on which we are working are true lines. They do not do our work. The world wants not only those who shall write in a little liberalism here and there between the lines of the old creeds, but those who shall take the stand for it, build churches for it,— not plead just for liberty to hold it, but proclaim it from the house-tops as the great bright truth of God. So the work waits for us just as much as ever it did; and it is the very work which our churches are here to do, and it is the layman's work just as much as the minister's. Ours to voice if you will, but yours to plan and organize, yours to carry in your hearts as one of the things you mean to make a success of, yours to support and carry forward with that practical energy and push which you know so well how to apply.

So I appeal to you to begin right away, and put the

Association on a new footing. Don't just go home to your minister, and say to him, "Isn't it time you were taking up that collection for the Association?" That would be something, indeed, for you to start him, instead of waiting for him to start you. But there is something better than that. Go home and get hold of four or five of the active leading business men like yourself, and say to them: "See: we have been doing this American Unitarian Association business in a pretty poor way. Suppose we take hold and lift it clear out of the old rut, and begin by doubling all round." Why, there is not one of them but would say "yes" to you in a minute. And then go ahead, and have a meeting about it after service some morning, and talk it up; and the next Sunday have a sermon about it, and put the thing through!

That is the practical matter which is waiting at this hour for a little more business enterprise. But do not stop with this one thing. It is for the whole of this great religious life and work which our churches might be doing in the world that I am speaking. Stand with us in all of it. Do what you can both for our faith and our church. And be sure of this,— that, holding to them in that strong, manly, earnest fashion, all that you can do for them will be nothing compared with what they will do for you.

THE American Unitarian Association is the working missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It seeks to promote sympathy and united action among Liberal Christians, and to spread the principles which are believed by Unitarians to be essential to civil and religious liberty and progress and to the attainments of the spiritual life. To this end it supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes, sells, and gives away books, sermons, tracts, hymn-books, and devotional works.

The Association is supported by the voluntary contributions of churches and individuals.

Annual subscriptions of any amount are solicited. A life membership costs fifty dollars. The following is the simple

Form of Bequest:

I give and bequeath to the American Unitarian Association, a corporation established by law in the State of Massachusetts, the sum of *dollars.*

Address communications and contributions to the Secretary at his office, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Some Unitarian Opportunities

SERIES NINE
NUMBER SEVEN

The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity, and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose.

Article I. of the By-laws of the Association.

SOME UNITARIAN OPPORTUNITIES.

The American Unitarian Association was founded in 1825 to promote union, sympathy, and co-operation among liberal Christians, to publish books and tracts for the diffusion of pure Christianity, to supply missionaries, and to found and maintain Unitarian churches. This work has been carried on with increasing efficiency for seventy-six years. Has not the time come when the friends of religious liberty in America should increase the resources of the Association and provide for the enlargement of its beneficent work?

The measure of the Association's efficiency is simply the measure of the confidence and aid of its friends. The Association is a democratic body, and is the faithful mirror of the earnestness or indifference, the ardor or the heedlessness, of those who owe allegiance to the cause of a spiritual Christianity. The Association is in constant need of the individual service and personal influence, the appreciating word, the fruitful suggestion, the helpful hands which may steady and stimulate new endeavor.

There are many branches of the work of the Association which ought not to depend merely upon the generosity of the passing generation. Should not the departments of the work of the Association which have perennial value, and which are not dependent upon the changeful habits of the community, be promptly and liberally endowed? Experience has abundantly proved that religious institutions are the most enduring of all the artificial institutions

of men, and that religious endowments, if made sufficiently elastic, and not too closely conditioned, are the most lasting means of doing good to human kind. Those who seek to do some perpetual good in the world cannot find a more durable and secure custodian for a trust for the benefit of mankind than a corporation which, like the American Unitarian Association, seeks to uphold imperishable ideals. Those who wisely give endowments to such an institution, pledged to the diffusion of pure and undefiled religion, plant a seed which will fructify for centuries.

The purposes to which endowments may well be applied are various. A number of suggestions are herewith offered, care being taken only to enumerate such departments of the work of the Association as may be assumed to have permanent place in the development of American thought and life.

1. The *publication* of the work of our scholars and leaders may well be the object of intelligent endowment. The Association now holds three small publication funds, and with the income keeps in circulation a few of the most valuable books of the great Unitarian scholars and preachers. It is the habit of the Association to give away copies of *Channing's Works* to ministers and divinity students, of whatever name or sect, who apply for the books. The experience of the Association justifies this form of influencing the religious thought and life of our country. Channing's convictions about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, about human nature and the blessedness of human life, about spiritual freedom and the mission of Jesus Christ, are messages which are not applicable merely to a single generation or a single century. His thoughts have enduring value, and are as

fresh and inspiring to-day as when they were uttered. A fund of $20,000 would put this work upon an enduring basis.

It is the habit of the Association to print and freely distribute sermons and tracts, and thereby diffuse the principles of pure and undefiled religion. The number of *free tracts* on the list of the Association at present is two hundred and twenty-four, and of these tracts some three hundred thousand copies are annually distributed. It cannot be doubted that this wide distribution of the words of men of deep religious conviction and large experience profoundly affects the thought and life of many individuals in our country. The Association would welcome an opportunity of extending this form of its activity.

The Association ought further to be able to encourage the work of *scholars* and to publish books which are not of sufficient commercial value to attract the interest of secular publishers. Books which appeal to the higher instincts of men, and which deal with the sources of higher civilization, do not, as a rule, command a large circulation, and cannot, therefore, be handled by publishing houses which are primarily commercial enterprises. The Association, if its means allowed, would be glad to print and circulate such books.

An opportunity of service is also offered to the Association to carry on *Book-rooms* in large centres of population, and to give Unitarian books and periodicals to libraries and reading-rooms where they will find their way to the minds and hearts of the people. Particularly is it desirable that the books should be available for the use of the students in American colleges and theological seminaries. It is the present habit of the Association to

give certain selected volumes of its own publications to libraries, wherever there is any reasonable pledge that the books can be made useful.

Again, the Association desires to offer courses of free *public lectures* in the centres of American population and at the seats of the great universities. For more than a century past the Bampton Lectures have been an important element in the development of English religious thought. For sixteen years the Hibbert Lectureship in London and for seven years the Gifford Lectureship in Scotland have produced a series of striking contributions to literature and scholarship. In America the Lowell Lectures in Boston and the Peabody Lectures in Baltimore — to mention only two of many useful trusts — have long been the guides of sound learning and public spirit. It would be hard to discover a more perpetual source of good or a more beneficent memorial of some good life than such a lectureship in the hands of a judicious, persistent, and broad-minded corporation, like the Association. In establishing such a trust, the scope of the lectures should not be closely defined, but their general purpose should be to hold up the standard of private honor and public duty, and to direct attention to the republican ideals of freedom, unity, toleration, and public joyfulness. A trust for this purpose should not be established with a smaller principle than $50,000.

2. Beyond the work of publication and the diffusion of liberal thought and principles through the press and the spoken word, the work of *founding and maintaining liberal churches* as permanent institutions invites intelligent endowment. The Association is ready to become the custodian of funds designed to promote the efficiency of existing churches or of churches yet to be established

Examples of the first kind can be found in the Annie Delano Hitch Fund, the income of which is to perpetually aid the Church of Our Father in Newburg, N.Y., or the Tompkins Fund, which is designed to aid the Unitarian church in Vineland, N.J. Such trusts may well be placed in the hands of the Association; and it may often prove to be a wise act, on the part of the trustees of existing churches which are blessed with small endowments, to transfer these endowments to the care and custody of the Association, where they may have the benefit of the business judgment of the directors of the Association, and share with the other funds of the Association in the profits of a general investment.

One branch of the work of church extension which particularly invites endowment is the work in *college towns*. The Association now supports churches in Amherst, Mass., and Ithaca, N.Y., the seats of Amherst College and Amherst Agricultural College and of Cornell University, and also at the seats of the State Universities of Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and California. It is obvious that this is an effective method of influencing American life, but academic communities are not, as a rule, able to pay much for the support of religious institutions; and a preacher who can command the attention and respect of an academic community must be a man able to command a good salary. The support of the college town churches is, therefore, a large and constant drain upon the present inadequate resources of the Association. The preachers in the college town churches are dealing with the young men and women who are to be the intellectual leaders of their several communities. The Association will gladly accept endowments whereof the income can be applied to main-

taining the existing college town churches and increasing their number.

3. The mission which the Association maintains in Japan is a *unique experiment* in foreign missionary work; and it has achieved an almost dramatic success, though constantly hampered by the inadequacy of its financial support. The mission is partly supported by the income of the fund bequeathed to the Association by James Hayward, but its work can be deepened and extended as fast as the liberality of the Unitarians of America increases. This mission makes a frank departure from the customary aim and method of foreign missionary work. It was commissioned "not to convert, but to confer." The great Christian missionary societies have always gone to work in a spirit of patronage. They have regarded non-Christian peoples as the Hebrew prophets regarded the idolaters of Edom or Moab. They have taken literally the Scriptural injunction, "Go preach to all nations repentance." The Unitarian mission has proclaimed a new missionary motive. It has sought to discover the good in all existing forms of faith. It has recognized the underlying sympathy in all religions, and emphasized unities rather than diversities. It has wrought in the spirit of Paul in his great missionary speech at Athens, proclaiming the unknown God already ignorantly worshipped, using the existing symbols and the sayings of the local poets to reinforce the new message. Our mission has not tried to free men from one superstition by inviting them into another superstition. It has refrained from arrogance and taunt of error; but, with respect for all that is good in the Japanese systems of thought and faith, it has invited friendly conference and co-operation, and acquainted thinking Japanese with the adaptability of liberal Christi-

anity to the spiritual needs of the lusty empire. If it has done no more than to show that Christianity also means kindliness, courtesy, and sympathy toward a foreign people and faith, it has served a good purpose; but besides this it has done a work of great practical value, and attracted the attention, sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile, of many of the best minds in Japan. The further endowment of this significant enterprise cannot fail to be productive of great influence; and its success will mean much, not only for Japan, but also for the whole conduct and temper of the foreign missionary work of the great Christian bodies.

An almost equally interesting field of service is opened to Unitarians among the *foreign populations in America* and in American dependencies. The commercial and political future of the States of the great North-west is largely in the hands of our fellow-citizens of Scandinavian origin. The Swedish, Norwegian, and Icelandic populations in the North-west are intelligent and powerful. For the most part these people are religiously under the sway of the Orthodox Lutheran Church; but there are many individuals and groups among them who earnestly desire a more rational interpretation of Christianity than that offered by the Lutheran pastors, and a more liberal organization of church life than is permitted by the Lutheran hierarchy. The Association endeavors to sustain a number of liberal preachers among these people, and this is a work which has large promise of usefulness. It is a work of American patriotism as well as of Christian service. The work will progress as rapidly as the means of the Association will permit; for the door is open, and the workers are ready. The Association will gladly become the custodian of funds intrusted to its care for the purpose

of spreading among the Scandinavians the principles of pure Christianity, and of upbuilding among them institutions that shall adapt them for the life and work of the American commonwealth.

Another great service is as yet unopened, but it remains for Unitarians to say whether the gospel of liberal Christianity is to have any hearing in the *new dependencies* of the United States. Already appeals and invitations are coming to the Association from Cuba and Porto Rico. The populations of these islands, nominally Roman Catholics, are in reality largely divorced from any religious connection. The Church has lost all authority, and the intelligent people require a different administration of religion from that to which they have been accustomed. The poverty of the Association obliges it to be deaf to these new appeals, but it will gladly undertake work among the Spanish-American populations as soon as its resources can be increased.

Again, the Association desires to enter into cordial and more sympathetic communion with the *fellow-workers in other nations*, and will gladly welcome endowments for the support of the work of broadening and deepening the ties that bind American Unitarians to their fellow-believers in Europe and Asia. The Unitarian churches of England and of Hungary have a vigorous and outreaching life, and are constantly growing into a closer relationship with our American work. In France, Holland, Germany, Scandinavia, and Italy there are many individuals and groups of liberal Christians who have little or no connection with organized liberalism. Toward these like-minded friends we have duties; and it would be a great gratification to the directors of the American Unitarian Association if the resources of the Association

permitted them to employ the services of a corresponding secretary, whose duty it would be to seek out these scattered liberal organizations in foreign lands, and give to them the strength and encouragement of our fellowship.

4. The *educational work* under the auspices of the Association has only just begun. In 1899 Mrs. C. B. Hackley, through her pastor, Rev. Minot J. Savage, D.D., gave to the Association an estate at Tarrytown, N.Y., for the purpose of establishing thereon a school for boys. Rev. Theodore C. Williams, lately of All Souls' Church, New York, has accepted the head mastership of the new school, and has entered upon his new work with enthusiasm. An additional gift from Mrs. Hackley has enabled the Trustees to secure a large estate, near to the original property, which offers a site of extraordinary beauty. There are acres of noble woodland, sunny terraces and rocky hillsides, fields for athletics and outdoor sports, and a pure and unfailing water supply. There is thus open before the Unitarian denomination an opportunity for creating a school which shall be, though without a sectarian exclusiveness, thoroughly congenial to Unitarians. Another devoted Unitarian has supplemented Mrs. Hackley's gifts with a gift of $40,000 for a memorial building to be used for a chapel and classrooms. There is now need of further gifts for dormitories, laboratories, and gymnasium. The opportunity for memorial buildings placed in charming landscape is remarkable, and the directors of the Association believe that Unitarian generosity will fully sustain the undertaking.

Beyond the necessity for increasing the opportunities for the training of our own children, there is urgent need for new facilities for *the training of ministers* for our

pulpits. Our churches rely chiefly upon the Harvard Divinity School and the Meadville Theological School, and both of these admirable institutions are situated in what is now the extreme eastern section of the country. The national growth and stability of our communion are all the time threatened because the sources of ministerial supply are so exclusively in the East. We are greatly in need of an indigenous ministry in the West and South, and should provide as soon as possible for local training schools for ministers. Such schools will not require as large endowments as the Eastern schools. They may well be established in connection with the State universities. Our students would thus be able to derive a great part of the instruction which they need from the university exercises, and two additional professors will probably suffice for the purely professional instruction. Endowments of not less than $100,000 each would thus establish divinity schools in connection with the University of California at Berkeley, Cal., the University of Chicago at Chicago, or the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor; and it is greatly to be hoped that some benefactor will arise who will upbuild our cause by this wise gift.

5. The cause of liberal Christianity advances just as fast and as far as earnest, able, devoted, and well-trained young men enter its ministry. The Association is greatly in need of funds whereof the income may be applied to *assisting promising young men* to prepare themselves for the ministry. It frequently happens that young men who are able to be of excellent service to the cause are unable to equip themselves for their calling because of limited resources; and it is not unusual that young men who have embarked upon a course of professional study are obliged, because of poverty, to cut it short in the middle, and enter

only half-trained upon active ministerial duty. The Association can wisely and safely administer at least ten scholarship funds, with a capital of $5,000 each. With this aid, it will be possible materially to add to the number and to improve the quality of the Unitarian ministry.

Another wise beneficence can be found in provision for the *aid or support of aged ministers*, or widows of ministers. The profession of the ministry precludes any possibility of money-making; and it too often happens that useful and successful ministers find themselves unable to make any provision for old age, and, apart from a moderate life insurance, no adequate provision for a wife and family. It is much to be desired that the churches should combine to provide the Association with a fund whereof the income can be used for the aid of aged ministers of proved merit and integrity. In co-operation with stable insurance companies, it is possible to make such an endowment exceedingly fruitful; and a fund of moderate capital, say $100,000, will suffice to provide reasonable annuities for almost all deserving applicants.

6. Finally, the Association may well be considered as a reliable and intelligent custodian for *any trust for the public good*. It already administers a few trusts not immediately connected with the life and work of the Unitarian fellowship. With the income of the Frothingham Fund, No. 2, it aids schools for the colored people in the South. With the income of the Lienow Trust Fund it cares for the poor in Boston, while it holds four funds for the benefit of individual parishes. While not soliciting such trusts, the Association offers its services to those who desire to do some perpetual good in the world. It should be pointed out that not a dollar has ever been lost to the Association by the malfeasance of any of its

officials; that its funds are secure because of the system of collective investment, which provides that no single fund can ever be lost by unwise separate investment. It may also be pointed out that, while the Association welcomes bequests for good purposes, it also welcomes endowments from the living.

The immediate needs of the Association and the cause it represents may then be summarized as follows: —

1. An endowment of $100,000, or several gifts or bequests of smaller amount, to establish Publication Funds.

2. A fund of $20,000, whereof the income can be used for the circulation of Channing's Works and other books of Unitarian writers.

3. A fund of $50,000 for a travelling lectureship or preachership.

4. An endowment of $50,000 for the International Unitarian Council and for the extension of foreign relations.

5. A fund of $50,000 for the promotion of Christian unity and fellowship.

6. An endowment of $100,000 to found a school for the training of ministers in the Central West or on the Pacific coast.

7. Scholarship Funds to the amount of $50,000 for the aid of students preparing for the Unitarian ministry.

8. Gifts to the amount of $100,000 to establish Superannuation Funds for the relief of aged ministers and widows.

9. Gifts toward the endowment of the Hackley School and for the founding of other secondary schools for Unitarian boys and girls.

10. Unrestricted funds, whereof the income can be applied to the general purposes of the Association and to the founding and maintaining of churches.

The following are the Trust Funds at present administered by the Association: —

Lienow Trust Fund.— Established under the will of Henry Lienow, of Boston, Mass., whose executors paid to the Association in 1841 the sum of $1,904.30, the income to be for the "use, benefit, and behoof of the poor in the city of Boston," and "to be disbursed by the officiating clergymen at large." The trust has increased by fortunate changes of investment to $5,577.84.

Perkins Fellowship Fund.—Founded by Francis Perkins, of Fitchburg, Mass., who in 1860 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $8,000, income "to be used and appropriated for the sole purpose of educating destitute young men for the Christian ministry." Now used to support the two "Perkins Fellowships," for aiding students preparing for the ministry. The fund now amounts to $10,300.

Kendall Fund.— Founded by J. Henry Kendall, of Fitchburg, Mass., who in 1863 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association $2,000, "the principal to be securely invested, and the interest to be applied to the relief of feeble and necessitous Unitarian societies." The principal of the fund is now $2,600.

Hayward Fund.— Founded by James Hayward, of Boston, Mass., who in 1866 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $20,000, "in trust, to be safely invested, and the net income annually expended in aid of Christian missions in foreign lands." The trust has increased by changes of investment to $24,300.

King Fund.— Founded by Mrs. Sarah L. King, of Taunton, Mass., who in 1875 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $10,000, the income "to be applied in assisting in the support of preachers in weak and destitute Unitarian societies in the New England and Western States."

Penhallow Fund.— Founded by Harriet L. Penhallow, of Portsmouth, N.H., who in 1883 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $5,000, "in trust, to invest the same in the debt of the United States or in the debt of some city of New Hampshire or Massachusetts, the annual income thereof to be appropriated to the use and purposes of the American Unitarian Association forever."

C. T. Thayer Fund.— $5,000 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association in 1884 by Mrs. Augusta Brewster Thayer, of Boston, Mass.

Whipple Fund.— Established in 1885 by the will of Mrs. Hannah G. Whipple, of Cambridgeport, Mass. The fund now amounts to $9,000, and the income under the terms of the will is "used to found or assist small Unitarian societies, West or otherwise."

Faulkner Fund.— Founded by Charles Faulkner, of Boston, Mass., who in 1886 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $5,000, "to be held by them in trust, the income only of said bequest to be expended in promoting the objects of said Association."

Hazeltine Fund.— Founded by Paul R. Hazeltine, of Belfast, Me., who in 1886 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $5,000, "to be safely and permanently invested and held in trust forever by said Association, the yearly income only of which to be

used yearly, to assist feeble churches and for general missionary purposes of the said Association."

Bigelow Fund.— Founded by Alexander Bigelow, of Worcester, Mass., who in 1889 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $3,000, "to be held by the said Association and its successors in trust, and to devote the income thereof to the support and maintenance and for promoting the growth and dissemination of liberal Christianity in the town of Natick."

Publication Fund.— Transferred from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Piety, and Charity, to the Association, by decree of the Supreme Judicial Court, for the promotion of the objects which the society had in view. $1,200 was received in 1888.

Smith Education Fund.— Established under the will of Joseph Sumner Smith, of Sterling, Mass., in 1889, the income to be applied, when the principal shall amount to $10,000, "to the payment of the expenses of college fees of a student or students" at Harvard University or Antioch College. The principal of $2,863.08 was received in 1889, and now amounts to $4,819.79.

Conant Fund.— Founded by Edward Conant, of Worcester, Mass., who in 1892 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association $5,000, as a memorial gift, in memory of his daughter, Elizabeth Anne Conant, "the income thereof and so much of the principal sum as may, from time to time, be thought expedient, . . . to be expended in aid of parishes of the Unitarian faith which may stand in need of pecuniary help, for the purpose of upholding and maintaining public worship and religious ministrations."

William H. Fogg Memorial Fund.— Founded by Mrs. Elizabeth Fogg, of New York, who in 1892 bequeathed

to the American Unitarian Association $20,000 (less State tax of 5 per cent.), "to be invested and the income thereof used for the purposes of the Association."

Thomas Fund.— Founded by Lyman A. Thomas, of Pittsfield, Mass., who in 1892 bequeathed to the Association the sum of $2,354.56 (two-thirds of the residue of his estate), "the principal to be put to interest, and at the end of each year one-half of the interest to be added to the principal, . . . and the remaining half of the interest used for disseminating literature having for its central truth 'Love,' the beatific principle of the universe." The principal of the fund now amounts to $2,703.05.

Frothingham Fund, No. 1.— Founded by Rev. Frederick Frothingham, of Milton, Mass., who in 1893 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association $5,000, "to be funded by the Association, and the interest thereof annually devoted to the diffusion of liberal Christianity, giving to this generous name its most generous interpretation, the spirit and not the mere name of Christ."

Frothingham Fund, No. 2.— Founded by Rev. Frederick Frothingham, of Milton, Mass., who in 1893 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $20,000, "to be funded, and the interest thereof to be annually devoted to the education of the colored people."

Ingersoll Fund.— Founded by Miss Caroline H. Ingersoll, of Keene, N.H., who in 1894 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $1,000, "the interest only of which is to be expended annually for the purposes of the Association."

Isaac Sweetzer Fund.— Established under the will of Mrs. Anne M. Sweetzer, of Boston, Mass., who in 1894 made the Association one of five residuary legatees, it

being her desire, in case the amount realized under each of these residuary bequests should be sufficient to make it worthy to be kept as a separate fund, that the name should be designated as the "Isaac Sweetzer Fund," in memory of her husband. The fund now amounts to $47,000.

Grindall Reynolds Fund.— Established by a board of directors of the American Unitarian Association, by vote passed on Nov. 13, 1894, appropriating $1,000 as the nucleus of a fund to be a permanent memorial of Rev. Grindall Reynolds, D.D., late secretary of the Association, since augmented by gifts of friends and by a bequest of $10,000 under the will of Robert C. Billings, of Boston, and now amounting to $12,500.

Buckminster Brown Fund.— Founded by Buckminster Brown, M.D., of Boston, who in 1895 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association, on the death of his wife, the sum of $5,000, "to be safely and securely invested as a permanent fund, which shall be known as the Buckminster Brown Fund, and the income thereof always applied to the assistance of feeble Unitarian churches . . . in this land . . . and . . . the distribution of such Unitarian books and publications as are designed to extend . . . a knowledge of and a belief in the doctrines of Unitarianism."

Whitney Fund.— Founded by the gift of two anonymous friends, in memory of their father, and by his expressed wish, "this fund to be known as the 'Whitney Fund,' and its securities to be always identifiable in title, the income only to be used for the diffusion of liberal Unitarian views, and no public mention of it to be made except as the 'Whitney Fund.'" $25,000 was paid to the Association in 1895.

Sawyer Fund.— Founded by Samuel E. Sawyer, of Gloucester, Mass., who in 1895 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $2,000, "to be safely invested in a permanent fund, and the interest only to be used in such manner as will best promote the interest and prosperity of the Association."

Nancy Brackett Fund.— Founded by Nancy Brackett, of Quincy, Mass., who in 1898 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $3,000, "the income thereof to be paid for the diffusion of their publications, past, present, and future."

Tompkins Fund.— Founded by Marion L. Tompkins, of Vineland, N.J., who in 1898 bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association the sum of $1,000, to be held in trust by said Association for the benefit of the First Unitarian Church of Vineland, N.J. In case the Unitarian society in Vineland should ever be given up as a society, then the said $1,000 shall be used and applied to the Unitarian cause in general as the American Unitarian Association shall see fit.

Annie Delano Hitch Fund.— Established in 1899 by the gift of $10,000 from Mrs. Frederic Delano Hitch, of Newburg, N.Y., in trust, the income to be used for the benefit of the salary of the minister of the Church of Our Father, Newburg, N.Y.

Christopher M. Weld Fund.— Founded by Mrs. Mary Ann P. Weld, of Boston, Mass., who in 1899 bequeathed to the Association $10,000, "to express the interest and sympathy of my late husband, Dr. Christopher M. Weld, and myself in that Association, and serve as a remembrance of us both."

Edward Wigglesworth Fund.— Founded by Mrs. Jane Norton Grew, of Boston, who in 1899 gave to the Asso-

ciation $5,000, the income to be used for the purpose of keeping in circulation the work of the Unitarian leaders of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Elizabeth R. Swift Fund.— Founded in 1900 by the bequest of Mrs. Elizabeth R. Swift, of Milton, the income to be used for the general expenses of the Association. The capital of the fund is $7,300.

Samuel G. Perkins Fund.— Established in 1900 by the bequest of Samuel G. Perkins, of Boston, with a capital of $17,000.

Robert C. Billings Fund.— Established in 1900, under the will of Robert C. Billings, of Boston, with a capital of $23,750.

First Church in Wilton (N.H.) Fund.— Founded in 1900 by friends and members of the First Congregational Society in Wilton, the income to be used for the benefit of the society. The capital of the fund is $1,200.

Dorman B. Eaton Fund.— Established in 1900 by the bequest of Hon. Dorman B. Eaton, of New York, Vice-President of the Association, with a capital of $2,000.

Olzendam Fund, No. 1.— Founded in 1900 under the will of Miss Sidonia C. Olzendam, of Manchester, N.H., with a capital of $5,000.

Olzendam Fund, No. 2.— Established under the same will and with equal principal, the income to be paid to the Women's National Alliance.

Skeel Fund.— Established in 1901 by the bequest of Mrs. Ann Augusta Skeel, of New York, with a capital of $10,000.

Abram E. Cutter Fund.— Founded in 1901 under the will of Abram E. Cutter, of Charlestown, with a principal of $4,000. Three-fourths of the income for the aid of the Harvard Church in Charlestown.

Cornelius B. Houghton.— Founded in 1901 by the gift, under certain conditions, of Mrs. Fanny C. Houghton, of Benicia, Cal., with a capital of $3,000.

Ann D. Williams Fund.— Established in 1901 by the bequest of Miss Ann D. Williams, of Boston, with a capital of $1,000.

Hiram Clapp Fund.— Established in 1901 by legacy of Mrs. Rebecca J. Bickford, of Boston, with a capital of $4,000.

Jonas G. Clark Fund.— Established in 1901 by bequest of Jonas G. Clark, of Worcester, with a capital of $2,000.

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath to the AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, *a Corporation established by law in the State of Massachusetts, the sum of .....dollars.*

Any further information which may be desired can be obtained by applying to the Secretary at his office, 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

THE NEEDS OF OUR UNITARIAN WORK

BY

Rev. SAMUEL A. ELIOT, D.D.

SERIES NINE
NUMBER EIGHT

THE NEEDS OF OUR UNITARIAN WORK.*

BY REV. SAMUEL A. ELIOT, D.D.

It is credibly reported that a distinguished divine of our communion, leading the worship of the congregation in the Harvard College Chapel, once offered a prayer after this fashion: "Make," he prayed, "the incorrigible corrigible, the intemperate temperate, and the industrious — dustrious." If I may use the word of another Cambridge clergyman, not of our communion, I should say that the primary problem set before our Unitarian people to-day is how to make the indifferent different.

The most formidable obstacle in the way of our organic advance is not misunderstanding or prejudice or the petty criticism that sometimes annoys us, or hostility or bigotry, but just our own indifference. The directors of your American Unitarian Association do not want and do not ask any uncritical acceptance of their decisions. On the contrary, they believe that a reasonable collision of opinions is wholesome; and it is obviously to the advantage of the Association when diversities of view are represented in the governing board itself. We expect of Unitarians independence of thought and candor of speech, but we believe that these traits are not incompatible with mutual respect and confidence. Those of us who are in earnest in this cause are not disheartened because some people oppose our work, but because our friends do not care for that work. It is not the cantankerous Unitarian

* An address at the National Unitarian Conference at Washington.

who discourages us, but, rather, the indolent and vacant Unitarian, who sits in the seat of the scornful, and disdains to know anything about denominational affairs, who never reads the report of the Association, and who never takes up the *Register* except to glance at the "Pleasantries." A well-bred and good-natured self-content seems to be a characteristic Unitarian trait. It is not that we do things that we ought not to do: it is that we leave undone the things that demand our intelligence and energy. For every good Unitarian soldier fighting at the front there seem to be five hundred looking on. We do not waste our talents; but do we not too often hide them? If we do not add to them, if we do not increase them by exercise, if we do not make them fruitful, do we not deserve the doom of the unprofitable servant?

Let us not confuse religious opinions with religious experiences. Let us not mistake information for obedience. A thoughtless familiarity with truth soon destroys respect for truth itself. I have no confidence in a faith that is all enjoyment without exercise. It is easy to make a truth an interesting but bed-ridden invalid. If health is to be sustained, it must have out-of-door work to do. A virtue unpractised is soon a virtue lost. "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, that man is blessed in his deed."

I know how hard it is to champion an unpopular truth, how easy it is to make plausible excuses for our denominational ignorance or apathy. I do not urge upon you any aggressive defiance, but I do long for a fresh outburst of moral courage. This work is hard service only to those who serve it grudgingly. Take hold of it hesitatingly, and, like a nettle, it seems all pricks and stings

Take hold of it resolutely and earnestly, and we shall find obligation turned into inclination.

We do not understand our heritage when we merely admire it. Beautiful, indeed, upon the mountains may be the feet of them that preach good tidings; but how is it when we are called to follow them when they come down from the heights and walk in the stern ways of common life? Here in our Conference we may well be filled with ardent desire to attain to our best ideals; but how will it be to-morrow, when we face the dust of vulgar selfishness? Will our bright enthusiasms vanish, like the bright clouds that make the morning landscape beautiful, or will they lead us right forward against all hidden iniquities and cherished prejudices? I pray that ours may be the ardor of spirit which is not merely a fine fancy or a sentimental approval of truth and virtue or a slothful sympathy with goodness. I want ours to be an ideal not easily attained, but to be won through hardness and unbroken fight. I want ours to be an enthusiasm which is able, unstained, unchilled, to go down into common life, and glorify it. I pray that our ardor may not be transient, but habitual; not involuntary, but intentional and personal; not general, but particular.

Will not such a passion of service increase the liberality and energy of the members of your Association? I would not seem to be censorious or complaining. I have elsewhere taken occasion to acknowledge the generous and self-forgetting helpfulness of many friends. The gains made in the efficiency of your work during the last two years have been due to the resolute helpfulness of such of our ministers and people who appreciate and accept their responsibilities in our democratic and co-operative organization. I do not fail in gratitude for that helpful-

ness; and I rejoice to believe that more and more our people are becoming roused to a sense of their opportunity, more and more are they willing to take up the cross of the present apostolate, and offer themselves to spend and be spent in the service of truth, freedom, and unity.

One of the largest gifts which any individual can make is that of personal service, and the Association enjoys a great deal of gratuitous service from its friends and members. I cannot pause for individual thanks to the many ministers and laymen and laywomen who put heart and industry into the often difficult task of raising the missionary money; but may I not congratulate you upon the quality and amount of the unpaid service rendered by your president, your treasurer, and your directors? That service requires sound judgment, knowledge of men, and knowledge of affairs. I do not hesitate to say that your present board of directors is second to none that your Association has ever called into its service. The board is faithful in duty, and is without a trace of provinciality. It diligently endeavors to make every dollar do the work of ten dollars. It faces all the hardest facts, yet is rationally optimistic and thoroughly sane and business-like. The constitutional articles by which your board is chosen are well devised, providing for the adequate representation of different sections of the country, for a fitting proportion of ministers, lay men and women, and by the three years' term for a sufficient mobility. It is important that the membership of the board should be sufficiently continuous to have a steady aim and a purpose transmissible from year to year, and equally important that it should be constantly refreshed by the election of representative men and women who are fertile in new suggestions.

Beyond the gift of service is the gift of money. The annual income of the Association ought to be greatly increased. It can be done, and done at once, if you will agree to adopt an intelligent subscription method and push the work promptly and thoroughly. I ought not to need to repeat that the contributions received before Thanksgiving are the most welcome. Do not, I pray you, leave the matter to the last minute. The canvass can be made in November just as well as in April. Unitarians have given liberally to everything excepting the furtherance of their own ideas. We are magnificent givers, but let me appeal to you to give to your own missionary work in some grander fashion than in the past. People call to us from every State in the Union to help them to build and to maintain Unitarian churches. And perpetually we have to say to them: "No! We believe, indeed, that there is both great need and good promise for a useful church in your community. But you must wait. Do not try to be born this year. Postpone it till next year or the next until we get a little more money to purchase swaddling-clothes and a cradle for you."

"I have," says Dr. Savage, from whom I have just quoted, "a Unitarian friend who said, not a great while ago, that she did not propose to give money to anything except Unitarian causes until she could find some generous orthodox who would contribute to build a Unitarian church. We have counted it a part of our liberalism to help everybody else and everything else. I believe in this, provided it can be reciprocal. But so long as our cause is suffering, languishing, waiting for help; so long as, though Moses and all his followers speak to the children of Israel and bid them go forward,

they cannot go forward rapidly enough to meet their great opportunity for lack of means,— so long as this is true, I appeal to you more generously, more heartily, to sustain and support our own institutions, our own purposes, our own causes, our own works, in every part of our land."

But beyond this matter of lifting the annual contributions is another matter. There are many branches of the work of your Association which ought to be promptly and liberally endowed. The experience of a hundred generations has abundantly proved that churches are the most enduring of all artificial institutions, and that religious endowments, if made sufficiently elastic and not too closely conditioned, are the most lasting means of doing good to human kind. The religious institutions of Europe have survived the destruction and reconstruction of every other institution, legal, commercial, or governmental, on the continent. They have, if I paraphrase the word of a Unitarian whom I especially honor,— they have seen society remodelled from its foundations, and have played no unimportant part in that reconstruction. However wedded to false doctrines, however corrupt in practice, they have been the steadfast guides of higher civilization. We perceive the tenacity of life in American churches. The first churches of Plymouth, Salem, and Boston, are older than any other Massachusetts corporation, court, or government. They have seen a colony transformed into a province, and a province into a State; and they have seen the State undergo the profoundest modifications in its industries, population, social habits, and religious hopes and customs. Those who seek to do some perpetual good in the world cannot hope to find a more

durable and secure custodian for a trust for the benefit of mankind than a corporation which, like your Association, seeks to uphold imperishable ideals. Those who wisely give endowments to such an institution, pledged to the diffusion of pure and undefiled religion, plant a seed which will fructify for centuries.

Again, a stronger sense of responsibility and a deeper religious vitality in our churches will furnish us with an increasing supply of wise, earnest, and devout men for our pulpits. It is a too obvious fact that in this generation an entirely inadequate number of men of force and ability are attracted to the profession of the ministry; and it is equally obvious that our work will go just as fast and as far as our churches are able to command the services of brave, reverent, high-minded men to be their guides and exemplars. Only through believers can unbelievers be reached; only by public spirit can men be made public-spirited; only through faithfulness can men be won to faith. A living message finds expression only in living spirits. From one man, through many men, to all men, that is the historical and still the inevitable method and progress of the Christian gospel.

It is a just reproach that Unitarian churches do not sufficiently recruit their own ministry. It is our privilege to welcome many ministers of large capacity of service, who have been bred and trained in other communions; and we rejoice in their allegiance. Often they make the best, the most ardent, the most self-forgetting of our ministerial force; but we can have no deep confidence in our stability and fruitfulness until the religious atmosphere of our own Unitarian churches and households is such as to make it natural and inevi-

table that manly youth shall, without any sense of hostile environment, any unsympathetic comment, choose the ministry as the largest, highest opportunity for the exercise of their gifts. Never, I do believe, was there such an opportunity as religious conditions present to-day for the energy of men of force, tact, and insight, and never,— though some of you may mock at the thought,—never probably such a reward.

Your Association asks, then, these things of you,— your confidence, your co-operative zeal, your money aid, your manly and generous young men. Are not these opportunities of service our sacred obligations?

THE American Unitarian Association is the working missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It seeks to promote sympathy and united action among Liberal Christians, and to spread the principles which are believed by Unitarians to be essential to civil and religious liberty and progress and to the attainments of the spiritual life. To this end it supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes, sells, and gives away books, sermons, tracts, hymn-books, and devotional works.

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THE VALUE OF UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP

BY

Rev. ARTHUR W. LITTLEFIELD

SERIES NINE
NUMBER NINE

THE VALUE OF UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP.

BY REV. ARTHUR W. LITTLEFIELD.

The relation of our independent Unitarian churches to the American Unitarian Association is analogous to the relation existing between individual men and society; *ie.*, interdependence. This being said, this paper might profitably close with its opening sentence, were it not for the general misapprehension under which we labor regarding our relation to institutional life. This confusion has its legitimate cause.

During the nineteenth century, men followed with might and main the quest for personal liberty. They found a goodly measure of it in religion and politics, and soon will be in possession of an equal degree of industrial and commercial freedom. But for three-quarters of a century the emphasis upon personal independence has tended to obscure the obligations which the individual owes to the institutional life in which all men "live and move and have their being." On all sides there is liberty, and the noble consciousness of independence which is the glory of American manhood; but we are only half awake to the need of co-operative effort and associative sympathy. Especially has this been true of our Unitarian churches, those free and admirable centres of noble thinking, pure aspiration, and moral endeavor.

Our churches distrust ecclesiastical organization. And

why should they not? Ancestrally, we derive from the great Church of the Middle Ages the most tyrannical organization which ever trampled on liberty and human rights. And we were no better off in our immediate parent, the Puritan Church, and our grandparent, the Anglican Church, than we were in our Catholic ancestor. Forms change, but the spirit lives. The spirit of intolerance and oppression, born in the Middle Ages, came down with full vigor through the Church of Henry VIII. and that of the Mathers. In the beginning of the nineteenth century there was nothing for the child to do but fight for freedom. Priestley and Channing won the early conflicts; and, in Theodore Parker's time, religious liberty for the outcast children of the Puritans was well established. A broad, personal independence was the result of a mighty struggle, begun by Roger Bacon and kept up by the noble heretics of the succeeding centuries.

Yes, but what followed the acquisition of liberty in our churches? Provincialism, selfishness, and isolation to a degree that nearly destroyed the effect of all the hard-won battles. Ten years ago I could point to more than one Unitarian church where the spirit of intolerance and bigotry was still dominant. I well remember the joy with which I entered the fellowship of a body devoted to truth, fellowship, and freedom in religion, after ten years of battling for a bit of religious liberty on my own account. But I remember equally well the sensation I received when the elevator rope parted, and I was brought up with an impact that nearly broke every standard of my ecclesiastical outfit! In my first attempts as a preacher of liberty and righteousness, I felt called upon to preach the new truth I had found. But I was told that such

preaching was not in good taste, and, still more important, not altogether charitable. I revolved these matters for a while and came to the conclusion that I was young, and that the Unitarian Church could not be in great need of my fighting battles for it that it itself had won fifty years before. My preaching then took on a turn for science, and a bit of art and moralizing that "took," with a few of the people: whether the rest liked it or not, I could not judge,— they rarely came. Finally, I did what in my heart I had wanted to do, but dreaded doing, because of the fear of "returning to Orthodoxy,"— preached religion: not the compromise with evangelicalism of the kind that "is indistinguishable from sermons preached in orthodox churches," but a real endeavor to make people realize that back of the appearances of things there is a reality that is personal and true and good and creative, and that our moral life, at its best, is a recognition that "our duties are divine commands," and that it is ever "the Eternal Voice that calls men to goodness." It was not long before I was told, and by influential people, too, that they had had enough of that sort of thing when in the "orthodox" churches, and didn't want any more of it! I learned to forgive all such eccentricity when I came to see that it arose from a too recent contact with a persecuting evangelicalism, and that such critics had not as yet entered into the larger life for which liberty but furnishes the opportunity. In a word, these people who objected to my preaching about things which I could not demonstrate by processes of sense-perception, not knowing what to do with their liberty, had insensibly drifted back into a selfish, provincial, and isolated existence, and had reverted in spirit to the type from which they sprung,— spiritual stagnation and

intolerance. The day is passing, happily for us, when such strictures hold good. More and more we are finding that the only thing acceptable that we can preach is religion,—vital, true, aspiring, Christ-like endeavor after the realities of life behind the vanishing forms of day and dust. I hear nobler sermons from our ministers, and I see an increase in the attendance in many places. I feel the impulse of a new spirit within our one-time free and desolate body. "Be good, and you will be happy," never had much currency among us; but "Be good without God" has at times been too much the burden of our speech. But to-day a diviner truth is being brought home to us,—"Love Him who alone is adorable and worthy: then within thine own heart thou shalt create a noble image of the object of thy adoration, and do works like unto his!" In other words, the moral and the beautiful life is not to be lived in a state of free and lonely isolation. Moral perfection and beautiful expression is with God and for God, with men and for men.

This, to my mind, is a rough outline of what has been going on within the Unitarian Church as it has been developing in the last fifty years. We see, clearly enough, that freedom is not sufficient for the spiritual needs of men; but neither is uniformity desirable. Out of an enforced conformity that stifled our spirituality we have raised ourselves to the plane of liberty; but, because we could no longer trust men, our liberty stagnated till we were well-nigh isolated in our provincialism. Once again the Spirit has moved upon the "formless void," and the new life of the Spirit is with us. God and his care for us and our love for him, together with the fraternal affection inspired by the common spiritual insight, is the new concept that is drawing us nearer and nearer to each

other in the work of the Church. We are beginning to see that, if we can have our liberty unimpaired, nothing can be better for us than the widest universality of interest and the warmest and closest fraternization between our churches, so only that the bond shall be spiritual, and not mechanical. Such breadth of spirit is the one remedy for denominational eccentricity and the stupidity of isolation.

But, when we look about for the means to foster this *esprit de corps*, we are in some trepidation lest we recall into being the machinery that imprisoned men in the Middle Age, and tyrannized over them in the Anglican and Puritan communions. However, seventy-five years ago the American Unitarian Association was called into being. It is but just beginning to be trusted by our churches as it should be. Just because liberty is isolating in its tendency, and the free church, most of all churches, is likely to overestimate its own importance and miss the true proportion of things both earthly and divine, we are looking to the Association as the representative and interpreter of our denominational life and the conserver of our liberty as well as the encourager of new endeavor.

Our churches exist because of the ideals of religion and life behind them. Take away these invisible foundations, discernible only to spiritual insight, and in a short time the properties would be in the real estate market. Now, as traffic in ideas is as essential to the worth and value of ideas as traffic in goods is essential to their value, is it not obvious that truth perceived, but held selfishly by him or the church that sees it, is sure, sooner or later, to lose all its value? Wherein is the value of the brilliant diamond flashing its beauty before admiring

eyes? We may say, Just because it is beautiful. But its real value lies in the desire of people to possess it. And so of your truth. It may be of eternal beauty; but, if no one appreciates it enough to want to possess it, it has, practically, no value. And not only must you have truth of perennial beauty as the foundation of your church and denomination, but you must be able to inspire others with the desire to possess it. Jesus was not the first of God's children to grasp the spiritual realities of life; but, more than others, he had the power to inspire people with the desire to possess these realities, even though Gethsemane and Calvary should stand in the way. It is just the same with the ideals of attractive worth which have called your church building and parish into being: they are transcendently beautiful, and you love and appreciate them; but, more than likely, you have covered your treasure from the comprehension of others or have revealed it in some eccentric or hapless fashion, so that others do not appreciate its value. Just here the Association can help you and the world by setting forth your incomparable treasure in a way that will compel an attention quite beyond your power to enforce. As an instance of the way truth may remain hidden from the outside world, may I remind you of this fact? All persons inside the Unitarian Church know that it is very wide-spread, so far as its ideals are concerned; but few outside our communion can be made to understand, from mere local observation, that we have form and being outside Eastern New England. At the great seventy-fifth anniversary of the Association the names around the hall were eloquent with the truth that each parish would set forth, but cannot; namely, that there is no land of any importance that has not its representative Unita-

rians. How often I heard, during the week, outsiders say, "I didn't know Unitarianism was so wide-spread!" Could any individual parish speak to the world as our churches grouped under the Association did at its seventy-fifth birthday? Most certainly not.

But there are other ideas, more important than the extent of interest in our faith, that the Association can proclaim better than any particular parish.

It is somewhat commonly held by outsiders that we believe neither in God nor immortality, even though it is admitted that we still trust the moral law. Would it be just safe to ask such persons to get their idea of the general denominational faith concerning belief in God and the hereafter from certain of our over-independent and perhaps eccentric churches? Perhaps Dr. Gordon got his impression in part from such isolated and unrepresentative cases, that "God is still a problem with Unitarians." But take our churches as a whole, and, especially as represented by the American Unitarian Association, and one would find that Unitarianism stands, most emphatically, for God and immortality as well as the moral law of noble living. So far as the average Unitarian of intelligence is concerned, God is anything but a "problem," fundamentally. If one knows enough of human nature to understand that "only the son knoweth the Father," with all the implications of that truism, then, for him, God exists most really and substantially; and this is the tendency of the average Unitarian. He does not, indeed, attempt to define the Father. The son, as son, can never do that. But that he does believe in him, and feel that his being is coextensive with that of God, just because "man is of one substance with the Father," and that the moral life is inspired by his love of

his heavenly Father,— this is true, and is most emphatically taught by the general spirit of our church as represented by our Association. The worth of your terms is only apparent when you have verified your conclusion. So the worth of your individual parish, in a broad sense, is only apparent as it is illuminated and interpreted by the associated life of all the churches.

Not only as the interpreter of the life of the churches has the Association utility, but as the conserver and defender of the individual liberty of the parishes it is invaluable. We are always liable to be threatened in our liberty by the churches about us. Such churches will be more careful to respect a liberty that is associated with that of all other members of the faith than they would that of some little independent church. We say the State protects our liberty, but it does so only in part. What State can protect you from social ostracisms and unfair presentations of your principles by avowed antagonists? But what the State cannot do, the strong men at the command of the Association can do. Your minister may be physically or temperamentally ill-equipped to ward off the blow of the local ecclesiasticism; but the denomination can furnish somebody competent to meet it.

Aside from strictly denominational considerations, every church has its duties to perform to the community around it and to the life of the times in which it finds itself. In this generation there are many problems that challenge the investigation of wise and forceful men. There are good causes to be championed, there are evils to be overthrown, there are dangerous tendencies which need restraint or judicious guidance. There is a clashing of interests, a conflict of ambitions; and you and I may have to be in the forefront of the responsible battles

of our own time. But not alone, let us pray,—not alone! While such conflicts are raging, I want to feel that all good men are with me; and I want my church to feel that every other Unitarian church at least is with it, shoulder to shoulder, spirit with spirit. These are times when even the most self-reliant man needs a good friend at his side. Truth-seeking and truth-obeying are dangerous businesses; and a longing for spiritual companionship is not a feeling of slavish dependence, but a reasonable discovery that in such emergencies lonely and individual effort is often futile. Singly we are ineffective: together we may conquer. We certainly do not ask the American Unitarian Association to stand behind us while we fight the battles of any special social good or ill, or try to solve the perplexities of the spiritual life; but our representative body can do us and the communities in which we work a great service in correcting or restraining local eccentricity, and pointing the way to associated efficiency in the cause of civic righteousness. The Association, which is only another name for the concerted activity of the denomination, can better than any single parish maintain our idealism and interpret to the world our thoughts and principles and hopes.

In all this co-operative effort we need to understand fully that individual liberty and associative activity constitute the very law of divine living; that the individual church shall not destroy the Association, that the Association shall never tyrannize over the churches, but that each shall hold the other inviolate, and practise together "the liberty wherewith" the Spirit "hath set us free." I fully believe that the largest liberty and development of our individual churches is to be had in vital co-ordination with the denomination at large, working through the

instrumentality of our representative organization. That body, well officered and directed, tends to correct the maladjustment of our churches to the life of the world in which they are. It gives wider currency to all our good ideals; it represents, as we never can do individually, our common purposes before the world. There is always a tendency for the individual churches to forget that "the old order changeth, yielding place to new"; that

> "God doth manifest himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

Then it is that we need the wisdom of all the churches to make safe the new and untried way for each one.

These are some of the considerations that make me an earnest advocate of our parish duty to our denomination as represented by our Association. I rejoice in it as the interpreter and conservator of our spirit before men. Still more do I hold it dear because through it we can be true to the spirit of the admonition to "go forth into all our troubled and struggling world, and preach the gospel of love and truth and righteousness to every creature, receiving them, if they will, into this fellowship of ours which holds to its faith in God, our Father, in the spiritual inspiration of Jesus, and in the continual presence of God in his world." I rejoice that our executive officers regard their high office as essentially the missionary office. From their preaching I look for a new interest in the ideals of life in America that make not only for righteousness, but for the love of divine things upon which the noblest moral endeavor rests. If this missionary work is well supported both by our encouragement and the integrity and zeal of the representative men whom we place at the head of our

associated effort, new churches will arise on the foundation of the ideals which we, through them, implant in the hearts of people, strangers to the liberal way; for may we never forget the eternal principle,— that the outward forms of wood and brick and stone which we call our churches, and the congregations which assemble in them rest upon, and are gathered together upon the foundation of those invisible ideals which, because unseen, carry with them their own creative immortality.

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THE EDUCATION OF OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

By CHARLES W. ELIOT, LL.D.

President of Harvard University

SERIES NINE
NUMBER TEN

Our Faith.

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
onward and upward forever.

Typical Covenant of a Unitarian Church.

In the love of the truth, and the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man.

Our Declaration

(*As expressed in the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association*).

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose."

(*As expressed by the National Conference of Unitarian and Other Christian Churches, at Saratoga, N. Y., in 1894.*)

"These Churches accept the religion of Jesus, holding, in accordance with his teaching, that practical religion is summed up in love to God and love to man.

"The Conference recognizes the fact that its constituency is Congregational in tradition and polity. Therefore, it declares that nothing in this Constitution is to be construed as an authoritative test; and we cordially invite to our working fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our spirit and our practical aims."

THE EDUCATION OF OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.*

BY CHARLES W. ELIOT, LL.D., PRESIDENT OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

It is always discouraging to attempt to talk about education, because everything has already been said. Plato thousands of years ago made a statement of the theory of education which has never been improved upon; and all down the centuries we come upon theoretical statements of the philosophy of education which remain good to this day, and which describe wise processes and methods of education, which have never yet been realized in the world. Nobody can outdo Milton's description of the education of a gentleman. Montaigne in France gives a perfect description of the wise discipline for children; and that at a time when the discipline of children in school and home was often rude and even brutal. You cannot improve much on Locke's theory of education. Shakespeare put the whole gist of the elective principle in education into two lines: —

> "Small profit comes where is no pleasure taken.
> Study, sir, what you most affect."

In short, it is characteristic of the subject of education that the theory of it has been over and over again ex-

*An address to the Ministers' Institute [Unitarian] at Worcester, Mass.

pounded almost to perfection, and yet practice lags far, far behind the theoretical statement; and the men and women who have done most in our day to improve education are those who have succeeded in putting into practice small portions of the ample theory of education which has long been at the disposition of the educated generations. It is the getting the right principles into practice which remains still in great part to be done.

But, then, there is another difficulty in regard to education which seems always to be postponing the day when the theory of the ancient philosophers or of the mediæval philosophers can be carried out. One trouble in education is this,— that the life for which we would educate youth is constantly changing. The life for which we would educate our youth to-day is a very different life from that for which my generation had to be prepared. The life into which the generation of Harvard youth to-day is going out is a life wonderfully different from that into which the Harvard youth of thirty years ago went out. Now, if the life for which we train children differs from that which went before, the methods of the training, or the subjects, or both, must differ. Plato illustrates this difference to perfection. He described the admirable education of a Greek free citizen when nineteen-twentieths of Greek society were slaves; and he distinctly says that as to the mass of mankind, as to the laboring classes, they need no education whatever. Therefore, however perfect Plato's theories, to-day's practice must have in mind a very different subsequent life of the trained youth in the society of to-day.

But I want to come at once to a part of the subject of education which has specific application to the religious body represented here,— the Unitarians. The mere ex-

istence of a body of Unitarian people is a striking phenomenon in the world. It never could have existed in peace and safety until this century. There are only seventy-five thousand of us to-day in the United States; but the fact that those seventy-five thousand people,— mostly educated people, mostly skilled people, mostly persons of intelligence, holding useful positions in the world, — the very fact that those seventy-five thousand people exist, and work, and think, and are free in our community, shows that the community for which we prepare our children is something unspeakably different from any community that ever existed before. So I think that Unitarians ought to take thought for the education of their children as Unitarians. We are a very peculiar set of people. We represent principles of thought which did not get expression in the world until our theological ancestors and preceptors had their being in the early part of this century. Now it is well known that Unitarians as a class take an unusual interest in problems of education. It has always been so in this country. It is just the same in England. It is just the same in Hungary. They have very good reason for so doing. They won their liberty of thought through education. They hope that their children are to enjoy further liberty of thought through better education. The Unitarians are as a body singularly influential in the community,— in whatever community they exist. They owe this strong influence to the very doctrines they have imbibed. They owe it to the independence of thought which led them to accept and hold these free doctrines. They owe it to the constitution of their minds, which inevitably inclined them to be or to become Unitarians. How is this power to be transmitted? How is this power,

due to the very nature of our theological opinions and to their intellectual consequences, to be transmitted generation after generation?

I shall have to begin, I think, with the little children. Education seems to be more important, and to give more striking results in its later stages than in its earlier; but I imagine that, if we could clearly see the educative effect of the mother, the father, and the brothers and sisters, in its relation to the childish mind, to the scope of that mind, we should see that the educative process before ten years of age is really more important and more productive than in any other period of life. Now how can the mode of thought which we Unitarians value be cultivated in the little children? We intrust little children to Sunday-schools; but they are there for a brief half-hour out of the week, and the teacher is not always skilled, and has not always the personal influence on the child without which little can be done for children. Is there any universally applicable method through which we can insure in little children the unconscious reception of the leading ideas of the Unitarian faith? I believe there is, and I believe that this method should be used in all Unitarian families and all Unitarian churches. It is the method of committing poetry to memory. I heard Dr. Crothers quoting somebody last Sunday to the effect that religion is poetry; but somebody else amended that statement by saying that religion is poetry believed. The amendment is important. Can we put into the childish mind through poetry a religion it will believe? We may be perfectly certain that no child ever got any religion out of a catechism. It takes an adult with the tendency to metaphysics to get anything out of a catechism. Will not a child unconsciously get religion out of poetry, if it be well selected?

I have seen the experiment tried in a fair number of instances,-- not enough instances for a general conclusion, but in a fair number of instances,— and I never knew it to fail. In order to give you an impression of the actual working of the method, I must enter into a few particulars. Take such a poem as Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith," a very simple poem of universal sentiments, and let the child at an appropriate age commit the whole of it to memory, so that it can recite it whenever asked for. Some of the most fundamental conceptions of religion, some of the most fundamental conceptions of the new science of sociology, will enter the child's mind with that poem. Of course, as in all poetry, a great deal of what we may call information, or suggested knowledge, is conveyed in even a single verse. Take the verse,

> "He hears his daughter's voice
> Singing in the village choir,
> And it makes his heart rejoice.
>
> "It sounds to him like her mother's voice
> Singing in Paradise!"

Now any child eight or ten years old will take that all in, and will learn from it that the blacksmith had a daughter who could sing, and she sang sweetly in the village choir; and the blacksmith had had a wife whom he loved tenderly and she was dead, and she sang when with him, and now she was singing in a happy next world, in Paradise; and the blacksmith liked to go to church because he heard his daughter who reminded him of her mother. All that is in that little verse; and it is a beautiful picture of some of the best parts of human experience.

Take another poem, very well known to us all, but

seldom used, it seems to me, for children,—Leigh Hunt's "Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)." There is a poem that any child of ten years old will take in, and it presents a series of delightful pictures; and at the end comes a very compact statement of the whole Unitarian theory about character.

Another invaluable poem for religious education is Bryant's "Waterfowl." (These are all Unitarian poets, by the way.) The whole Unitarian view of the Providence of God is presented to the child in that lovely poem,—God is guiding the bird through the pathless air, and just as he guides the bird he will guide me. It is the simplest possible presentation to a child's mind of the loving Fatherhood of God.

We may, of course, use hymns for these purposes; and abundant material exists in all our collections.

Conder's

> "Beyond, beyond the boundless sea,
> Above that dome of sky,
> Farther than thought itself can flee";

Addison's

> "The spacious firmament on high,
> With all the blue ethereal sky,"—

what pictures of the majesty of the heavens they present! How welcome, how natural, to the childish mind!

Edmund H. Sears, another Unitarian poet, wrote

> "Calm on the listening ear of night
> Come heaven's melodious strains,
> Where wild Judæa stretches far
> Her silver-mantled plains."

In that poem he presents in the most attractive possible way the myth of the angels singing at the birth of Jesus; and he presents it again in his other poem,

> "It came upon the midnight clear,
> That glorious song of old."

The Bible contains some passages the imagery of which should be impressed on the minds of all our children at a very early age. Two or three of the Psalms,— "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," "The heavens declare the glory of God,"— two or three sentences,— single verses of the Bible,— every child should learn by heart, and hold right through his life.

A few years ago I was asked by Brig.-Gen. Casey to prepare some inscriptions for eight tablets to stand over eight allegorical statues in the great reading-room of the Congressional Library. One of the statues represented Religion. He wanted inscriptions, seventy-two letters long, about religion and seven other great subjects. I sent him one of the best definitions of religion that has ever been written, and one of the most complete statements of the most attractive doctrine of modern sociology, — "So we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." I thought it was appropriate in a National Library,— "One from many." But Gen. Casey came down to his office one morning with my letter in his hand, and said to his second in command, Mr. Bernard Greene, now superintendent of the building (another Unitarian, by the way): "President Eliot has sent me eight inscriptions. I like them all but one. That one is about religion. It is too Christian. I don't feel well to-day. I wish you would write a letter to Dr. Eliot, and ask him to give me another inscription to go

over the statue of Religion." Gen. Casey went to his house, and in an hour he was dead. In a day or two Mr. Greene wrote me, asking if under these circumstances I would prepare or suggest another inscription. I fell back on Micah,— "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" And that is written over the statue of Religion. Those two sentences every child of our faith ought to learn and hold to. They will never get a better definition of religion than Micah's.

I must not tarry longer on this part of my theme. I believe in the conveying to the minds of little children through poetry all the fundamental doctrines of the Unitarian faith. I believe it can be done with pleasure to the child, with delight to the parents. I am sure of the last, for I have tried it.

Now what next, after childhood? We come now to the stage called "secondary education," which ought to cover from twelve to eighteen years of age or thereabouts. Boys of this age seem singularly impervious to the ordinary methods of religious instruction,— girls, perhaps, less so. I am not very sure about that, because I have had no daughters, and there are no girls in Harvard College; but I am told that girls are less impervious to religious instruction between twelve and eighteen than boys. At this age, however, the minds of youth are open to a good many things which are very precious to us, and which ought to be precious to us. They are open to all heroic thought. They are generally open to free thought, to any delineation of character or description of events impregnated with the idea of liberty. If any of us want to do anything in this world of a durable character, let us take pains to mix our doing always with some new atom

of freedom. Nothing else stands in this world, in religion or education or politics. The durable thing in this world is that which is associated with the growth of human liberty. All our Unitarian prophets have been teachers of liberty. The greatest of them all, Channing, gave the greater part of his life to the teaching of liberty of thought. Freedom to think, freedom to act, freedom for the individual, freedom for society, freedom for the slave, one of the most elementary forms of the preaching of liberty,— all our Unitarian teachers and poets have made much of this side of their teaching; and, in doing so, they have fastened to something which is eternal. Now the mind of youth between twelve and eighteen will grasp and hold all such ideas. Therefore use this mode of interesting them and instructing them in what is, after all, a fundamental conception of our faith. Instruct them in the doctrine of liberty, and illustrate it by the best human examples in all fields.

When we come to the details of a course of instruction, of a programme of studies, there is room for great difference of opinion, for prolonged discussion. The faculty of Harvard College was three years debating the advisable requirements for admission to Harvard College from now on through the next generation. It took three years to come to a conclusion. When they reached their conclusion, nineteen twenty-sixths of the requirements, so called, were in subjects prescribed; and there remained seven twenty-sixths only for choice. Therefore we are in no danger at present in our country of not finding in the classifications of secondary education enough prescription, something uniformly required of each highly educated youth, girl or boy. I ought to add, perhaps, that Harvard College is not more conservative than other Ameri-

can institutions. But the programme of studies is not so important an element in school work as many of us imagine. It does not make so much difference what a girl or boy studies, as how he studies and with whom he studies. For myself, I think the safest way in the education of a single individual child is to find out, if you can, what that individual child likes most in the way of intellectual exertion and does best, and then see to it that that child gets instruction in that thing if he gets nothing else. Make sure of that. It is astonishing how little we really need to know of what are called essential subjects. How little we really need to know of arithmetic, for instance, — next to nothing,— only the power of adding and subtracting and multiplying small numbers,— certainly nothing above ten in the head. I observe in the ordinary grammar school programmes of this country that it is not considered necessary for a child of fourteen to have studied any geometry at all, the subject of geometry being reserved for high schools. That is one of the most extraordinary exclusions that the world sees at present, geometry having been almost from the time of its invention, thousands of years ago, an element of great value in intellectual training. Still our children get along excellently well until they are some fourteen years of age without any geometry.

As to languages, there surely is no necessity of our children's knowing any language but English or any literature but English; because through English we may get all that is most valuable in every other literature. Therefore, it is a safe doctrine throughout secondary education to require only the barest elements of subjects which we are perfectly certain have some practical applications, and to guide the training of every mind on those subjects

which the child most affects, as Shakespeare says. There is not a subject in all the range of human knowledge that will not develop to a high degree every mental faculty in a mind which loves it. And, after all, the object in secondary education is always — not primarily only, but primarily, secondarily, and always — to win power, to win the capacity to use one's mind with clearness, accuracy, precision, grasp, and productiveness. That is the object of education.

Now, passing beyond the secondary school, we come to the university or college or the technical school. There the same principles apply, only the gates are thrown wide open, and full choice appears — the choice a boy makes when he decides on a profession, for example, and goes to the School of Technology; the choice which a youth in college makes when he says, I will devote myself to history and government and economics, because I am going to be a lawyer or a politician. At that stage of education the full principle of liberty is brought into play. Never be afraid of that. It is academic freedom. It is the way to power. All the great men of past times who have conferred unmeasured benefits on the world through their own intellectual triumphs have shown their intellectual capacities long before they were twenty years old. In fact, if a boy or youth does not show remarkable capacity in this subject or that before he is twenty years old, the chances are a thousand to one he never will.

But how about character? Character is the object of education. Character is the object of the Unitarian religion. I have seen for thirty years a steady stream of youth coming to the university, eighteen or nineteen years of age. In almost every instance the character of the youth is determined before he goes to college. He has

determined the way he faces before he goes to college. That is the all-important thing in this world: Which way do you face — up hill or down? We all of us slip and fall; but we can all of us face the right way, pick ourselves up and try again, if we fall. But it does not do to face down hill. You fall further, and it is harder to get up. Now that facing is almost invariably determined in a boy before he is eighteen years old. Hence the importance of founding schools where Unitarian children can be taught to face the Unitarian way. There is a wonderful difference in the effect on a boy's mind — and I think it must be the same with a girl's mind — between the influence of the Unitarian ideas of God, Jesus, religion, and human society, and the old-fashioned Evangelical ideas on those tremendous themes. We Unitarians have been neglectful of that tremendous difference, and we have sent our children to schools where there was no religious influence or to schools where there was a religious influence utterly opposed to our own views of God and Jesus and religion and human society. I have known Unitarian parents to do that from the most trivial motives,— because some nice boys or nice girls were going to that school; because there was a head of the school whose manners were good, and who could teach the boys the conventions of society; because in a given school there were none but sons of very well-to-do people. I say these motives are trivial, yet they have often been the motives for selecting this school or that by Unitarian parents.

This neglect is analogous to another neglect which we Unitarians have too long been guilty of,— the neglect to take pains to propagate the faith that is in us. I had occasion, in addressing a Unitarian Club in Chicago not long ago, to tell a story of a most excellent man, promi-

nent in all good works in Boston, who, when asked to subscribe to a new fund for our Divinity School, said he would not give a cent to make a man a Unitarian who could help being a Unitarian. We have had a precious doctrine committed to our care. We have had the privilege of inheriting from our leaders in the faith a literature of utmost value. We have heard with our ears preaching that ought to have resounded through the country; and we have done how little to spread this preaching, these writings! We ought to cause to be pointed out to all our children the main features of the history of the Unitarian movement. We ought to bring to the knowledge of our children the lives of all the Unitarian saints and heroes. We ought to show and declare that the acceptance of the doctrines of liberty is not inconsistent with the deepest and sincerest piety. Many people think of Unitarians as iconoclasts, destroyers of the faith and beauty of the world, as people who would annihilate reverence and respect and devoutness. Now that, to our thinking, is the precise opposite of the truth. The truth is that a perfect freedom of thought is not only consistent with the sincerest piety, but it is really the only atmosphere in which the holiest piety can grow. We ought to teach our children with utmost care the Unitarian conception of Jesus,— Jesus the mortal, the man, therefore the hero, therefore the exemplar. We ought to point out to them that there can be no real heroism in a being who knows beforehand the great results of his sacrifices or his sufferings. Foreknowledge excludes all heroism. Foreknowledge of result destroys the essence of sacrifice. There was no sacrifice if there was foreknowledge of the prodigious result. All heroism, all pathos, is taken out of the life of Jesus when he ceases to be for us

the human being. But do we teach our children that? Do we say that of Jesus in our churches and our homes? Not so clearly as we ought. We have often failed to present with perfect clearness our own conception of Jesus, our leader, our master, our guide.

I was to speak to you on education. I wanted especially to speak of the kind of education which Unitarian children ought to have. My conviction is that this is the kind of education that all children ought to have.

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THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

By JONATHAN SMITH, ESQ.

SERIES NINE
NUMBER ELEVEN

THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.*

BY JONATHAN SMITH, ESQ.

MAN is a creature with a threefold organization, with physical, intellectual, and spiritual faculties. Each has distinct uses and powers, but all three are necessary to the complete man. The general problem, which comprehends every other, is how to develop these several parts so that the individual can fulfil the purpose in his creation.

We call that process Education, or Training; and in two of the three particulars we act consistently with this intent. We begin the physical culture of the child on the day of its birth, and continue until maturity. Every school must have its playground, and every academy and college its gymnasium. Teachers are expected to lend the weight of their influence to athletics, that the pupils may grow up strong and healthy, and be able to command the utmost of what their physical powers are capable. In all this we obey a natural law, and it is right.

If we go a step higher, to the intellectual powers, the same law and the same custom hold. We spend nearly a third of our taxes upon the public schools. The State compels every parent to send his child between the ages

* An address before the Worcester Conference of Congregational, Unitarian, and Other Christian Societies.

of eight and fifteen years to school at least thirty weeks in each year. We establish the library, and encourage public lectures for the same purpose. From the amount of money spent and the space given in the press and upon the platform to this great question, it would seem as if we made the intellectual training of our children the chief work of our lives. Public opinion, stronger than the law, demands that the boys and girls shall have the best mental education possible; and the youth of both sexes think they have been wronged if they do not get it. This theory and practice, now continued for so many years, has wrought the expected result. We are fast becoming a nation of scholars, and our young people are being better fitted for the struggle for existence than those of any other country. All this makes it more imperative that education should not stop with the training of the physical and intellectual powers. Given a boy with his bodily and mental faculties well disciplined, and what have you got?

Not necessarily a good man or a safe citizen. But you have increased his power for evil a hundred-fold. Do not make the mistake of assuming that a purely intellectual culture makes him necessarily more moral or law-abiding. It is the moral training he gets at school, and the moral and religious training received in the home and through the church and Sunday-school,— poor and imperfect as it often is,— which moulds him into a kind neighbor and patriotic citizen. Give a child the best education the schools afford, but keep him free of all moral and religious influences until his maturity, and would you be answerable for his conduct? Would you go on his bond? How seldom do we pause to think what a tremendous factor in their right development is the moral and religious

atmosphere amid which our children grow up! It is the very salt which saves them to themselves and to the State.

When the moral and religious faculties are suffered to lie dormant and neglected, the best intellectual culture may become a direct aid to crime by increasing the temptations and facilities for its commission. The dangerous foe of modern society is not the unlettered or half-educated drunkard and petty thief, but the man with well-trained intellectual, but undeveloped moral and religious faculties, who steals under the forms of law, buys legislatures and corrupts courts, and who brings no conscience to the handling of other people's money. The point of it is, that in multiplying our facilities for secular education, by so much the more have we made it imperative that moral and religious training shall go hand in hand with it, or we are simply building on the sand. Let us not make the mistake that, because our schools graduate our boys and girls into law-abiding men and women, their good citizenship is due to their intellectual training simply. It is the moral culture they get, their instruction in obedience, temperance, truthfulness, and honor; and, more than that, it is the moral and religious atmosphere of the home, the Sunday-school, and the church,— these influences it is which, moulding and directing their intellectual faculties, make of them safe and patriotic citizens. Many here may differ from me, when I say that one of the best secondary educational institutions New England has ever had was the old-fashioned hill town academy, in which many of us were trained. Its curriculum was narrow. The average teacher of to-day would probably scorn it. It did not seek to teach everything in the heavens above or in the earth beneath and in the waters under

the earth in the short space of three or four years. Its instruction was often poor, and the studies were taught in ways utterly foreign to present methods; but the atmosphere and tone of the institution made a profound impression upon its students. The whole environment of the academy was distinctly moral and religious. Its students were taught by precept and example the virtues of honor, of self-respect, of reverence, of worship, and of self-denial. It produced a class not of intellectual athletes only, but of strong, devout, and religious men and women, who have largely helped to make New England civilization what it is. The key to its success was an intellectual culture shaped and directed by moral and religious instruction and influence.

The thought is emphasized by all the conditions of our modern life. This inordinate thirst for wealth, this ambition for place and power, the hurry and drive, and the feverish anxiety which reigns in every avenue of activity, multiply the temptations which beset our youth. Intellectual training loosens the brain from its torpor, and stimulates mental activity in the numberless ways of business and social life. It opens the door to enterprise, adds intelligence and reason to the physical powers, and makes them available for every purpose of wealth or ambition. The more complex the civilization, the more strenuous is the struggle for social and economic position, and the greater the temptations which assail the individual at every turn; and so stronger and more self-poised must be the citizen to meet them. Intellectual culture alone will not suffice.

But let us go a step farther: Moral training alone is not sufficient. Any scheme of conduct, except as it is based on religious principle, is full of danger. By moral virtues

I mean such as honesty, truthfulness, temperance, justice, and the like. These and their kindred qualities may be selfish, and practised for purely selfish ends. They have to do with man solely in his relations with his brother man. They do not necessarily take cognizance of a higher power. They may say, "Be honest," because it is the best policy, not because it is forever right; or "Be truthful," because men hate liars, not because it is in obedience to that Being who is eternal truth.

Have we not here the secret of why so many men float along for a time, apparently correct in conduct, and then under the strain of a great social or business temptation go wrong, and commit grievous offences against law and social order? Religious principle is not the governing force of their lives: their moral code is selfish at the bottom, and looks to self-interest alone. The test comes, and they fall. A moral code uninfluenced by religious motive makes the sin of any act to consist in its being found out. Its possessor says, "No one will ever know it," "The jury will not convict," "I can destroy all the evidence, and it may increase my wealth or influence." Is it surprising that, when one acts from such an impulse, he stumbles and falls? But, when his morality rests upon religious principle, he realizes that there is One Being who does see and does know, and is certain to judge him. There is a restraint upon his words and deeds greater than any which courts or public opinion can impose. The fact really is that the moral education we give our children is so permeated with precepts and instruction which have their basis in religious thought and principle that the two have become blended together. It nevertheless remains that there is a wide distinction between the two, and it is because they have become so intermingled in the moral

instruction given in our homes and in the public schools that such good results are attained.

It is through the spiritual part of man that religion speaks and acts, and it is the culture of this part which is essential to his safe and perfect development. We may not admire the Jesuits in all things, but their theory on this question was sound. "Religion," says its plan of studies, "ought to be the base and summit, the centre and soul, of all education." Religion trains the conscience, makes man reverent, fills him with humility, bends his will into obedience to the divine law, inspires him to duty, bridles his passions, and stimulates the altruistic virtues. He who is honest because it is the best policy is a different man from he who is honest because it is right. He who is charitable and humane in order to stand well with his neighbor is a less safe citizen than if he is such because it is so laid down in the Sermon on the Mount. We have grander ideals and conceptions than can be realized out of the strictly moral virtues, when divorced from religious promptings. We live in a world surrounded and fenced about by mysteries we cannot fathom. We understand nothing of our past, and of our future "who knows?" We know neither the origin or destination of anything. All these questions are forever being asked; but no response comes from anything this world can give, and no moral code and no strictly moral teaching can furnish any answer. It is to religion we go for light on these dark places, and there is nowhere else we can go. We learn this lesson sooner or later; and, the earlier we understand it, the happier and the more noble will be our lives.

If the training and development of the religious emotions and faculties be essential to the perfect man,

then they should be the chief concern in any educational scheme. I do not imply that religion should be taught in the public school or college, any more than in the gymnasium or at the golf links. But I do mean that in the home, in the Sunday-school and church, it should go hand in hand with physical and intellectual culture, and should be systematic, persistent, and thorough. It is the root and source of all true living and growing: it is necessary to our complete development as intellectual and moral beings. In the divine economy it was designed to control the hand and will of man.

All this is a mere truism which you have heard told many times in an infinitely better way. It is a truism also to say that the religious training should begin with earliest childhood, and be diligently continued up through adolescence to maturity, as physical and intellectual culture now are. The same law of development governs the spiritual which does the physical and mental powers. How faithfully we follow it in minor matters! We have a choice plant: it is hardly above the earth before we begin to water and fertilize it. We move it from window to window, where it will get the best sunlight and the best air. How closely we watch every new leaf and train every new shoot! and we protect it from vermin as carefully as we do our children from the germs of disease. We do all this that the plant may develop to the utmost all its possibilities of leaf and flower. We do the same in the training of our domestic animals. We direct the bodily and mental development of our children on the same principles. Up to a certain point we do enough; but there we pause, and in so doing make a terrible mistake.

The religious part of a child's nature develops early; for religion is a life, a deep-rooted instinct, as natural as

hunger or desire for exercise. It is for the interest of the individual that this instinct should not remain submerged in a sea of feeling; but it should be guided, stimulated, and raised to the range of the intellectual comprehension. The child gets its first religious impressions from the parent. Its ideas of love and obedience, of respect and reverence, of honor, duty, fear, trust, and right and wrong, all come to it from its relations to its father and mother, who stand to it in place of Deity. It is an external impression, and not an internal consciousness. Hence the vital importance of the claim that the child should be properly guided through its tender years and its growing faculties rightly directed. At first children look upon Deity as a Being above and outside of themselves, and upon religious doctrines and life as things external, and expressed in church customs and creeds. Then comes the period of adolescence, when the glimpses of a larger life and a broader comprehension assert themselves. Formerly the child's ideas of Deity and duty, and of religious emotions and observances, were embodied in precept and custom; but now they begin to be its own. It is often a "period of friction, of clash, of storm and stress, and of doubt." The individual has begun to feel his own dignity and worth, and he clings to them as choice becomes necessary between the personal and selfish view and the impersonal and unselfish. It is the formative period; and these unfolding powers must be intelligently controlled, often checked, sometimes stimulated, but always guided, precisely as we guide and direct the child's mental powers.

How forcibly are the power and influence of religious training of the young shown in the history of other religious movements and peoples! Loyola grasped its

true significance when he sought for his society the control of the education of the children of the Catholic Church. Whatever else he and his followers did, they so trained the youth of that communion in the principle of the faith that there grew up in it the most obedient and zealous discipleship the world has ever known. It was a discipleship which carried Catholicism to every land and people under the sun, stayed the Reformation, and saved the Catholic Church. Study the maxims of the Jesuit creed, and see how fully they sketch the Catholic character of a hundred years ago. That faith still trains the child in obedience to the decrees of the Church, and in reverence for its forms and ceremonies. Here you have the key to the devotion of the Catholic, which is the wonder and admiration of the Protestant sects. The Jewish child is carefully educated in the tenets and customs of the Jewish faith. You seldom hear of a Jew indifferent to his father's creed; and it costs, it has been figured out, $40,000 to convert a single one to Christianity. The law is not different with us, and the example should not be lost. What kind of churches and Unitarian constituencies do you think we would have if for the past hundred years the children of our faith had been as carefully nurtured in its precepts and creed as are the children of the Catholic and the Jew?

Our subject is the "Religious Training of *our* Young People," and emphasis needs be put on that little pronoun "our." Here and now we are specially concerned in the education of our young people into the Unitarian faith. If, in our honest opinion, we have no better gospel than any other Protestant sect, we have no excuse for denominational existence. If we are sincere, it is the bounden duty of every Unitarian to train his

children in the precepts and doctrines of his faith. "Secular education," says Professor Gneist,— and Felix Adler approves the remark,— "must be unsectarian, but religious instruction must be sectarian." Without stopping to demonstrate the truth of this statement, it is enough to say that we are inconsistent in our theological position if we fail to act upon it. It is unnecessary in this connection to eulogize our creed or point out why, in our opinion, it is better fitted than any other to produce the highest and happiest type of manhood and the best citizen. But no more solemn duty is imposed upon the Unitarian parent than to carefully ground his child in those cardinal principles of our confession contained in those four words of mighty import,— truth, service, liberty, and God,— and to teach him that only through acting by them and living in them can he attain the full measure of his intellectual and spiritual manhood, and reach his highest usefulness as a member of society and the State; that only with them as his motive and guide can he secure the truest happiness and continue to be a growing man to the end of this life and the life to come. In season and out of season, at home and in public as chance occurs, in church and in Sunday-school, by constant precept and by living example, these fundamental maxims of our creed should be kept before the child until they become as much a part of his life and conduct as is the blood which flows in his veins a part of his body.

President C. W. Eliot, in weighty words, has stated our duty. "We have had," he says, "a precious doctrine committed to our care. We have inherited from our leaders in the faith a literature of the utmost value. We have heard preaching that ought to have resounded through the country; but how little we have done to spread

that preaching and literature!" "We ought," he continues, "to point out to our children the main features of the history of the Unitarian movement, we ought to teach them the lives of all the Unitarian saints and heroes. We should declare to them that our doctrine of liberty is not inconsistent with the deepest and sincerest piety, that perfect freedom of thought is the only atmosphere in which the holiest piety can grow. We ought to teach our children with the utmost care the Unitarian conception of the Master,— the mortal, the man, therefore the hero and exemplar. We ought to point out to them that there can be no real heroism in a being who knows beforehand the results of his sacrifice or his sufferings."

This is significant language from the greatest living authority on all educational questions. First of all, we should take it for granted that, as soon as our children are born, they are of the Unitarian faith and are going to remain so. They come into our homes; and they are forthwith treated as members of our family, and are carefully educated into all the household manners, duties, and customs. They are born into the State; and from the moment of birth the State throws over them the ægis of its protection, and sees diligently to it that they are faithfully educated in the principles of obedience to law and patriotism and in the duties of good citizenship. So every child of liberal parents should be given to understand that he is born into the liberal church; and, from the moment of birth, both parent and minister should look to it that their offspring are carefully trained in the distinctive tenets of that church which is their birthright.

Let us confess the fact that hitherto we have, in this particular, been grossly negligent. A mistake frankly

admitted is half-corrected. We have so magnified our liberty that all definite, doctrinal instruction has been put into total eclipse. We must disabuse our minds of the feeling, all too prevalent, that this liberty means liberty to neglect positive doctrinal teaching to our children. Ours is the liberty of seeking and accepting the truth in all matters of faith and duty, and following it fearlessly and conscientiously; but it is not the liberty of letting children choose whatever religious notions and idiosyncrasies they may pick up from their street companions and school associates. Not thus do we deal with their habits of speech and conduct acquired outside of our home and church. These we closely watch and quickly correct if they depart from the home standards. How often have Unitarian parents said, and how many are now saying, that their children must receive no sectarian bias, that they must be left perfectly free to choose their own faith and their own church; and that, if they select some other than that of their parents, it is just as well. Pardon my language if I characterize such theories as disloyal to our faith and as inconsistent for any sincere Unitarian to hold or act upon.

If all the Unitarian fathers and mothers of seventy-five, fifty, and thirty years ago had given their children a positive, aggressive culture in Unitarian principles, the great army of the religiously indifferent would to-day be much smaller, and we should not have to grope our way into the evangelical churches of the present to find so many of their church-going descendants. The law of evolution governs in the domain of theology and religion as surely as it does in the natural world. It can be demonstrated that the Unitarian Church is the child and legitimate successor of the Calvinistic church of one hundred years

ago, and that it by right should hold the leading place in our New England communities. If it had been alive to its opportunities and had grasped the mighty significance of training its young people in the positive affirmations of our church, how different to-day would be our denominational position. But let us not be discouraged. At last we are alive to the duty of active effort in this regard.

One and all, we have a grave responsibility resting upon us. Let us see to it that our errors in the past, in dealing with this problem, are not continued in the days to come.

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